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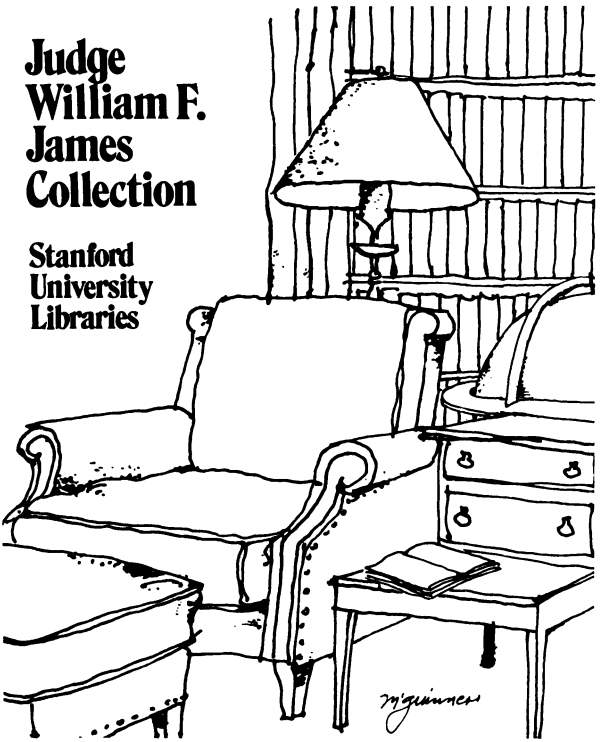

Roaring Camp Edition

THE WRITINGS OF
BRET HARTE

WITH INTRODUCTIONS, GLOSSARY, AND INDEXES

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME XX

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WITH MANY BLUSHES, POUTS, AND PRETTINESSES, TILL THE POOR FELLOW WAS HALF CRAZY

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[illegible]HARLES M[illegible]

[illegible]

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

STORIES AND POEMS
AND OTHER UNCOLLECTED WRITINGS

BY

BRET HARTE

COMPILED BY

CHARLES MEEKER KOZLAY

WITH AN INTRODUCTORY ACCOUNT OF HARTE'S EARLY CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CALIFORNIA PRESS

BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
The Riverside Press Cambridge

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CHARLES MEEKER KOZLAY

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BRET HARTE

The magic of his wizard pen
Still holds the world in thrall;
From lordly laurels won of men
No leaf may fade or fall.

In ways he trod, and treads no more,
His footprints linger still,
Alike on England's mother-shore,
The New World's sunset hill.

But ah! the scenes the Boy first saw,
The sea Balboa named,
The bay which stout old Portolá
For sweet St. Francis claimed,

The great Sierras piercing blue
Of sky with snowy crest,
He knew and loved them best; they *knew,*
They know, *and love him best.*

They speak of him, the forest trees,
Redwood, madroño, pine,—
The Mission Bells,— all these, and these
His memory's sacred shrine.

INA COOLBRITH.

Russian Hill, San Francisco,
May, 1913.

PREFATORY NOTE

GRATEFUL acknowledgment is here made of the courtesies extended me in the compilation of this volume. To Miss Ina D. Coolbrith, whom Bret Harte termed "the sweetest note in California literature," I am indebted for the Dedication Poem, "Bret Harte." This is singularly appropriate, since Miss Coolbrith is one of the old guard of letters of the Pacific Coast, one of the coterie of writers which included Bret Harte, Mark Twain, Joaquin Miller, and Charles Warren Stoddard, all of whom created literature in those early days which will find an abiding place in the hearts and minds of men for all time. To Robert E. Cowan, of San Francisco, I owe the good fortune of having acquired the rare old files of the *Golden Era* and some other Californian newspapers. He has from time to time given me valuable and helpful information relative to Bret Harte's early work on the Pacific Coast. I am grateful for the courtesies shown me by Mr. J. L. Gillis, of the State Library of California, at Sacramento; Mr. Frederick J. Taggart, Curator of the Academy of Pacific Coast History, Berkeley, California; the authorities of the Library of Congress, Washington, D.C., including the Copyright Office, and Mr. Frank P. Hill, of the Brooklyn Public Library. For permission to republish some of the copyrighted material found in this volume, sincere thanks and acknowledgment are due to the following: Mr. William Heinemann and Mrs. T. Edgar Pemberton, of England; Houghton Mifflin Company; Century Company; Harper & Bros.; Charles Scribner's Sons; the *Sun*, New York; the *Critic* (now *Putnam's Magazine*); the *Cosmopolitan Magazine;* the *American Magazine;* the *Independent*, New York; the *Overland Monthly* and the *Californian* (later), San Francisco, California.

C. M. Y[redacted]

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From drawings by J. Henry.

INTRODUCTION

THIS volume is the outgrowth of many years' research on a Bibliography of Bret Harte. It was while searching my fortunately acquired files of old Californian newspapers that the vast amount of hitherto uncollected work of Bret Harte became apparent. The value of this material and the belief in its interest to the public created the desire to publish Harte's immature and unrevised poems and prose, as well as some of his later work which so far has not found a place in his collected writings.

It has been thought best to arrange these items in the order of their original appearance, subdividing them into the periods to which they naturally belong. The "Early Poems and Prose" up to 1865, although written during Harte's formative period, show even at this early time the same genius which we find later in more finished form. The "Poems of Local Interest" have been so called because they deal solely with Californian events. The "Civil War Poems" are Harte's expressions on the passing events of that great struggle. "Later Poems and Prose" comprise such of his writings after he left California as also have not been included in his collected works. Wherever the meaning of the poems and prose would otherwise be obscure, the compiler has given the place and circumstances under which they were written. Alterations or corrections in no case, however, have been made in the text.

No attempt will be made to give a biography of Bret Harte, — that has already been ably done by Mr. Henry C. Merwin, — but some account should be given here of Harte's

early contributions to the press of San Francisco. That so little has been written of this part of Bret Harte's career may have seemed strange to the casual reader, but when he takes the following facts into consideration, the solution becomes apparent. Harte's early literary work was done principally while he was on the staff of the *Golden Era* and the *Californian*. The difficulty of obtaining the data regarding his connections with these periodicals is the reason for the obscurity of his early literary work. Even before the earthquake fire which destroyed the libraries of San Francisco, no complete file of either of these periodicals could be found. Mrs. Cumings in her *Story of the Files* says, "The complete file of the old journal [the *Golden Era*] is no longer in existence. Since the day spent by the writer in going over the files, the columns have been riddled and scissored mercilessly. The heart of the volumes has been cut out piecemeal, and only the wretched skeleton is left. A new paper was to have been started with these clippings from the past . . . but it came to naught." Of the *Californian* she says: "The *Californian* lived to be three years old and has never died. In tracing the history of Californian publications the memory of Charles Henry Webb's paper of the early sixties maintains a surprising vitality. It made a strong impression at that time, which continues to-day. But not a word can be found in the printed page to tell of its existence: — it is always in men's memories that it has its abiding place."

The writer was happily able to acquire files of both these papers, and it is due to this good fortune that Harte's early literary work is now republished. From the pages of these old files, and some other Californian periodicals, we are able to give a chronological sketch of his early writings. His first literary effort, Harte says, "was at the mature age of eleven," before his arrival in California. He says it was "a bit of satirical verse entitled 'Autumn Musings,'" but

so far the compiler has been unable to find any record or copy of the poem. Apparently this is lost. It has been generally believed that Harte's first known poem was "Dolores" which he sent as "a California Poetical Venture" to the editor of the *Knickerbocker*, or *New York Monthly Magazine*. The poem appeared in that magazine in January, 1858. This idea, however, is erroneous, for we must go back almost a year in the files of the *Golden Era*, where on March 1, 1857, appears the poem, "The Valentine," which is perhaps his very first California "venture." During this year he contributed to the *Era* eight other poems, all of which, of course, precede "Dolores."

At this time, the latter part of the summer of 1857, Harte wrote his first prose, a series of letters to the *Golden Era*, entitled "A Trip up the Coast." These were long letters descriptive of the places he visited and would be of no particular interest to the present-day reader. The following extract is, perhaps, the most interesting portion: —

A month or two ago I resolved to leave San Francisco. I had grown wearied of an endless repetition of dirty streets, sand hills, bricks and mortar. The smiling but vacant serenity of the morning skies, the regular annoyance of afternoon gales and evening fogs, had become contemptuously familiar. I sought a change of clime. . . . Uniontown, through its adolescence — a mere yearling grazing on the country pastures — possesses a certain stamina and stability, in this country, alas! too unfrequently met. California towns and villages have an unsubstantial, temporary look in keeping with their ephemeral character. But here is a reminiscence, faint though it may be, in the white cottages and green lawns, the neat, substantial, and well-ordered farms, of New England propriety and Eastern homes. It is true, the Bedouin-like, roving, vagabond disposition of our people is growing less noticeable; but it will be some time yet before "home" will have any other than its usual California significance — the "States." . . . I started with a pleasant party for Eel River. It was one of those glorious, smoky, hazy days so rare to these bright, blue skies, resembling the Indian summer of the Northern States, and carrying me back to the fairy hills, dreamy uplands, and pleasant

valleys of the Catskills. It was a Sabbath, so like those doubly-blessed ones, years past, that in my fancy I could hear the church-bells ringing lazily out of the soft valleys, and swelling into a subdued and dreamy music, all in harmony with the drowsy landscape: one of those days, when, a child, I no longer doubted or wondered that on such had Rip Van Winkle closed his eyes and never cared to wake. But with this rare similitude of clime the scenery was widely different. For hours we rode through long aisles of tall redwoods, some of their pillared shafts measuring twenty-five feet in diameter at their base and towering away two and three hundred feet above us.

Brushing away the tangled salmon bushes, with their exquisitely-tinted berries yet dripping with dew, leaping the fallen trees when practicable, or making a longer détour in compliment to some forest monarch which in dethroned majesty still blocked the way, and catching glimpses of the river through the waving elders, with the stillness broken only by the jingling spurs and trappings, we at length emerged upon the open beach. . . . The long-sustained, heavy and unbroken swell, traversing an entire hemisphere, rose and fell at our very feet. In the track of the setting sun, the distant shores of Japan and the far Cathay were washed by the self-same waters. Far to the south the narrow line of sea beach stretched away, diminishing to a silver thread in the distance, till it melted into the hazy upland. Humboldt Lighthouse stood, like the forgotten sentinel of Pompeii, in the midst of solitude and desolation. Low sand hills rising behind us shut out the view, and contributed to the feeling of utter isolation which gradually took possession of our little party. . . . We were proceeding at a pleasant canter, when suddenly B., riding a little out from the rest, dashed into the surf in a frantic manner, executed some surprising demisaults, hung for a moment beneath the saddle, and then returned to us, dripping like a merman, and holding high above him some black object — the waif he had recovered from the dashing spray. What do you think it was? What would impel a sane individual, never suspected of recklessness, to such an act? Was it a casket? Or a plethoric pocket-book — the rejected god cast back at its worshiper's feet! None of these A child's shoe! a tiny worn-out and patched morocco gaiter — that was all! It passed from man to man without comment. Of that group two were fathers, and one had passed a long exile from a happy hearth thousands of miles away. As *he* took up that little bit of leather and prunella, do you think he saw only the long, white beach, and the vacant expanse of sky and water? Or did his fancy conjure up a misty, tearful vision of

sunny curls, love-lit eyes, graceful figure, and fairy feet rising out of that little shoe, as the genii rose from Solomon's sealed casket, in the Arabian story? Was it the spray, think you, that moistened his eyes, as he gazed, and coursed down the toil-worn furrows of his cheek? There was no time to inquire. The episode of a moment's duration was over, the shadow had passed, and in the clear sunlight and fresh sea breeze we journeyed on.

These letters to the *Golden Era*, excepting a poem "The Bailie o' Perth," are the only work of Harte's which we have for the time he was absent from San Francisco. He had gone to a place called Uniontown, and it is said that he worked while there on the *Humboldt Times*. It is known that he acted as assistant to the editor of the *Northern Californian*, a weekly paper published for a short time at Eureka, the county seat of Humboldt County. If files of either of these papers for that period were in existence some good work might have been preserved. Perhaps, however, he did very little literary work, for at this time in the office of the *Northern Californian*, he learned the printer's trade and also spent considerable time at other occupations. When he returned to San Francisco he worked for a time as a compositor on the *Golden Era*, and in an article contributed to that paper entitled "Wanted a Printer" he sets down his impressions as a typesetter.

"My Metamorphosis," Harte's first story, was contributed to the *Golden Era* in April, 1860, shortly after his return to San Francisco. From this time until the establishment of the *Californian* in 1864 his literary work on the *Era* was almost continuous. Poems, stories, and prose followed each other in rapid succession. One of these stories, "The Work on Red Mountain," appeared in December, 1860. This is Harte's well-known story of "M'liss," which was included in his early collected works. The fact that this story was rewritten and published again in the same periodical, calls for some explanation which we might make at this time. Joseph Lawrence, the editor of the *Era*, was

perhaps the first of the many admirers of Melissa Smith, and he insisted that this rough little diamond deserved a better setting. He wanted the story lengthened and strengthened, and the title to be "M'liss." So with a long notice and a loud trumpeting, and a special woodcut heading, "'M'liss,' an Idyl of Red Mountain, by 'Bret,' one of the best writers of romance in America," began as a serial story in the issue of September 20, 1863. It was to be "completed in twenty-four numbers." In point of fact it was completed in ten numbers, but they were at times numbers of weeks apart. He had intended to rewrite the original story as opportunity offered and furnish the copy from week to week. Chapter eight he devotes to a humorous explanation of why "he hesitates to go on." The rewritten version is found in the present-day collected writings.

To the *Golden Era* for the years 1860 and 1861 Harte contributed weekly a long list of papers on passing events under the pen-name of "The Bohemian." His work on that paper was so voluminous that he resorted to a number of *noms-de-plume:* "Jefferson Brick," "J. Keyser," "Alexis Puffer," and other names which he had introduced in his Bohemian papers. During 1862 and 1863 these papers were continued in slightly different form. The majority, however, are of such ephemeral interest, being accounts of local events at that time, that taken out of their place they have little meaning and we do not include them in this volume. Some of the later Bohemian papers which were on more general topics he included in his collected works. The following extract may be of interest here as showing the style of these early papers: —

That rare combination of quick perceptive faculties with great reflective power, sometimes exhibited in a single individual, always produces in my mind feelings of awe and astonishment. I remember that as an infant I exhibited a disposition to "take notice" early, and have since been called an "observing young

man," but I don't see that this faculty, unsupported, has been of any service to me. So I have lately been cultivating a reflective and reasoning style from my friend Puffer. Now Puffer is the antithesis of myself, and thinks about everything and sees nothing. We get along very well together, and help each other like the two gifted young men "Sharp Eyes" and "Big Head" in the fairy tale. In combination we are enabled to follow a very respectable train of reasoning and deduction from established fact. Let me give you a single instance. Puffer and myself were walking down Montgomery Street. I saw a dog with a stumpy tail. Somebody threw something nice to the dog with a stumpy tail and the dog with a stumpy tail wagged his tail violently. I then remarked to Puffer that I had noticed that dogs with short or stumpy tails wagged them much harder than dogs with long tails. This remark set Puffer to thinking. The next day he handed me the following, written on a large sheet of paper. "A dog with a short tail will wag his tail much more rapidly than a dog with a long tail. As with a pendulum, the same force required to describe a certain cycloid if applied to a lesser one will produce a quicker vibration of the pendulum (or tail). Dogs being ignorant of natural philosophy, apply the same power to tails of unequal length. Hence the velocity of a dog's tail in wagging may be considered in inverse proportion to the length of the tail. The ethical supposition that a dog with a short tail is more susceptible of gratitude, is pleasing but erroneous. We have here a beautiful illustration of the reconcilability of sentiment and expression. That principle which is denied the form of dignity and grandeur, may be exhibited in vivacity and cheerfulness. — A. P." I thought that was n't bad for Puffer.

As early as 1862 appears in these files the first of Harte's "Condensed Novels": "Victor Hugo's New Gospel 'Les Miserables'; Fantine Done into English from the French of Victor Hugo — par J. Keyser." This was soon followed by "La Femme" and others. All of those which he deemed worthy have been republished by him.

By this time the Civil War was the dominant theme throughout the land, and Harte's loyalty to the Union found expression in the large number of poems contributed to the *Era* in 1862–63, and later in the *Daily Evening Bulletin* and the *Californian*. Mr. James T. Fields, the poet,

complimented this loyalty by prefacing the reading of a poem of Harte's some years after the war with the following words: —

"If the poet whose absence to-day we deplore,
Had struck but one note for his country's disgrace,
If his lyre had betrayed you, ye heroes of war,
I could not and would not stand here in his place.

"But his soul was responsive to all that was grand,
And his loyal young spirit leaped up in a flame;
And he fought with the pen for his dear struggling land,
As you with your swords, sons of glory and fame.

"And so, for my friend, I will take up his song,
And give it a voice, though, alas! not its own.
To him the quaint verse and the genius belong;
To me but the accents of friendship alone."

The *Golden Era* would doubtless have published Harte's contributions for many years longer had it not been for the influence of one Charles Henry Webb, who left the editorial staff of the New York *Times* and went to California in 1863, and contributed to the *Era* under the pen-name of "Inigo." Webb, or John Paul, as he sometimes termed himself, was not long in convincing himself and a few others that there was need of another weekly periodical in San Francisco, and so, in May, 1864, when the *Californian* was launched, Bret Harte unreservedly threw in his lot with the others, and stood by the paper, even after Webb gave up his interest in it and went back to New York.

"I was — and am — rather proud of that paper," wrote Webb some eight or nine years later. "It represented considerable of my money and a good deal of my time, for all of which I had nothing to show. To the *Californian* under my management, many who have since obtained widespread reputations contributed, and it was called considerable of a paper, to be published so far away from Boston. True, the contributors never received much pay for their *work, and no flattering* inducement of more was ever held

out to them; but, on the other hand, they did not have to pay anything for the privilege of expressing themselves weekly, and this was a blessed immunity which never fell to my lot while owning the paper."

In September, 1864, when Webb resigned from the paper and Bret Harte succeeded him as editor, he said, "In saying good-bye, I do not intend to perpetuate a bad sell. My position has been a very pleasant one. I had not much salary, it is true, in fact none at all, but then I had constant employment, and what more could be desired? The journal is now in a flourishing condition, and I leave it. It has for some time been paying its own expenses, and they tell me that the question of its paying mine is simply a matter of time. To me it looks like a matter of eternity. And as life is brief, I intend to take the present opportunity and go a-fishing. The journal passes into hands eminently capable of conducting it. In the editor the readers will recognize one whose graceful contributions to this and other journals have already made his name a household word on this coast."

Bret Harte from the inception of the *Californian* had been contributing to almost every issue. Much of this work, contrary to his custom, was without signature. He had always signed his stories and poems "Bret," "H.," "F. B. H.," etc., or with one of his numerous *noms-de-plume*. In an editorial at that time he says: "It was the intention of the proprietors to make the paper purely impersonal, and that any fame or credit which it might evoke from abroad should accrue to the interests of the journal alone. For that purpose the author was willing to merge his individuality in that of THE CALIFORNIAN. But the project failed signally. The articles were copied without credit or belief in their originality." With the completion of the first volume, the ownership of the paper changed hands and Harte retired from the editorial chair. Webb returned

from his "fishing trip" and again became the editor, a position which he held until April, 1865. Bret Harte, though not reassuming the editorship, assisted in the editorial work, and continued writing for the paper from week to week. On April 22, 1865, the paper went into mourning for Abraham Lincoln, and one of Harte's contributions to that issue appears on the editorial page, entitled "Our Last Offering."

While it is true that Bret Harte contributed at times to other Californian papers, notably the *Daily Evening Bulletin*, *Alta California*, the *News Letter*, etc., the bulk of his work was done on the *Golden Era* and the *Californian*. The last-named paper was really the nucleus from which sprang the *Overland Monthly*, with Harte as editor from its beginning in July, 1868, until December, 1870. Much has been written of this periodical, containing as it did, the contributions that first brought him to the notice of the Eastern world and made him famous.

It is more than likely that a large number of the poems and prose contained in this volume would have been lost had they not been embodied in the present edition. A popular author might sometimes wish, at an advanced period in his career, that some of his earlier products had been lost sight of. It is not known that this was the view held by Bret Harte, nor the reason for their non-appearance in his collected works. It is altogether likely that he brought together and used such of his work as was at the time available. He always had enough material for his constantly appearing books and so did little searching for anything which was not at hand.

We offer this volume to the enthusiasts and collectors and to the casual reader and lover of Bret Harte, in the belief that they will derive much pleasure from the perusal of the same, and in the hope that it may be of interest *not only for the material* it contains but for the manner in

which it shows the gradual development of the author. It is a curious coincidence that this volume, primarily a compilation of unpublished work, should include so much of the author's writings and show this development to such an astonishing degree. Harte's popularity has been great. This volume, we hope, will inspire a still greater love and appreciation of his writings.

EARLY PROSE

STORIES

1860–1865

STORIES AND POEMS

MY METAMORPHOSIS[1]

(Bret Harte's First Story)

WHEN I left the Academy of the Reverend Mr. Blatherskite, after four years' board and educational experience, it was with a profound confidence in books and a supreme contempt for the world — in which cosmogony I included all kinds of practical institutions. With a strong poetical imagination, a memory saturated with fictitious narrative, and a sensitive temperament full of salient angles not yet rubbed off by contact with society, I easily glided into the following adventure.

The great vagabond principle peculiar to such temperaments led me to wander. A love for the beautiful made me an artist. A small patrimony sufficed my wants; and so, one day, I found myself loitering, pencil and sketch book in hand, in one of the pleasantest midland counties in England.

Near the village where I tarried, a noble estate spread over the country. All that the refined taste of a great family — whose wealth was incalculable — had gathered in successive generations, lay in that ancestral park. The same liberal spirit which had adorned it, opened its gates to the curious stranger; and here it was that I picked up many a woodland sketch, a study, a suggestive grouping of light and shadow, which you may see in those two pictures numbered in the catalogue of the Academy of Design respectively as Nos. 190006 and 190007, and to which the "Art

[1] *Golden Era*, April 29, 1860.

Journal" so favorably alluded as "the happiest pre-Raphaelite effort of the gifted Van Daub."

One July afternoon, — the air had that quivering intensity of heat, which I think is as palpable to sight as feeling, — after a quiet stroll in the park, I reached the margin of a sylvan lake. A lawn, girdled by oaks and beeches, sloped toward it in a semicircle for some few hundred feet, and its margin was decorated with statuary. Here was Diana and her hounds, Actæon, Pan and pipe, Satyrs, Fauns, Naiads, Dryads, and numberless deities of both elements. The spot was rural, weird, and fascinating. I threw myself luxuriously on the sward beside it.

I had forgotten to mention a strong predilection of mine. I was passionately fond of swimming. The air was oppressive — the surface of the lake looked cool and tempting; there was nothing to prevent an indulgence of my propensity but the fear of interruption. The knowledge that the family were absent from the mansion, that few strangers passed that way, and the growing lateness of the hour determined me. I divested myself of my garments on the wooded margin, and plunged boldly in. How deliciously the thirsty pores drank up the pure element! I dived. I rolled over like a dolphin. I swam to the opposite side, by the lawn, and among the whispering reeds I floated idly on my back, glancing at the statues, and thinking of the quaint legends which had shadowed them forth. My mind enthusiastically dwelt upon the pleasures of its sensuous life. "Happy," said I, "were the days when Naiads sported in these waters! Blest were the innocent and peaceful Dryads who inhabited the boles of yonder oaks. Beautiful was the sentiment, and exquisite the fancy which gave to each harmonious element of nature a living embodiment." Alas, if I had only been content with *thinking* this nonsense! But then it was that the following solemnly ridiculous idea took possession of me. A *few strokes brought* me to the bank, and gathering some

alder boughs, I twined their green leaves intermixed with rushes around my loins. A few more I twisted into a wreath around my foolish cranium. Thus crowned, I surveyed myself with unmixed satisfaction in the watery mirror. I might have been Actæon in person, or a graceful Dryad of the masculine gender. The illusion in either case was perfect.

I was still looking when I was startled at the sound of voices. Conceive of my dismay on turning around and perceiving a crowd of well-dressed ladies and gentlemen, scattered in groups about the lawn. It at once rushed upon my mind that the family had returned with company. What was to be done? My clothes were on the opposite shore. An open space intervening between myself and the woods rendered escape in that direction impossible without detection. As yet I was unperceived. But a party of both sexes were approaching by a path which led directly toward me. I looked around in anguish. A few feet from me arose a pyramidal pedestal of some statue; but Time, the iconoclast, had long ago tumbled the battered monolith into the lake. A brilliant idea struck me. I had got myself into this horrible scrape by the foolish impersonation of my fancy; I resolved to free myself by its aid. The pedestal was about eight feet in height. To scale this and place myself in attitude was but a moment's work. With a beating heart, but perfectly rigid limbs, I awaited their coming. I hoped, I prayed it might not be long.

Imagine to yourself a clean-limbed young fellow of one-and-twenty, *sans* the ordinary habiliments, with no other covering than nature's own and a sort of fig-leaf apron made of rushes and encircling his loins and thighs, his brows bound with an alder wreath, and the evening shadows cast over his pale face and chilled but upright figure, and you have me as I stood at *that* eventful moment.

To give effect to my acting, I closed my eyes. For

approached. I heard the rustle of silks and the sound of voices.

"Beautiful!" (full feminine chorus). "How perfectly natural!" (*sotto voce*).

A cracked base voice — probably *pater-familias* — "Yes, decidedly. The position is easy and graceful. The contour is excellent — not modern, I should think, but in good preservation."

A drawling falsetto: "Ya-as, pretty good — vewy fair copy; 'ave seen lots of such fellows at Wome. They're vewy common there; don't think it's quite cowwect; vewy bad legs, vewy!"

This was too much. I had been a great pedestrian and flattered myself that I had pretty well-developed calves. I could bear female criticism; but, to put up with the indelicate comments of a creature whom I *felt* to be a spindle-shanked dandy, infuriated me. I choked my rising wrath with clenched teeth, but moved not an external muscle.

"Well," said a sweet voice that thrilled me, "I have no disposition to stay here all night, with heaven knows how many woodland sprites about us. The place looks weird and gloomy. I almost fancy that yonder gentleman has a disposition to step down from his pedestal and carry some of us off to his home in some hollow tree!"

I did dare to open my eyes, though each syllable of that musical, gurgling voice rang in my ears, and sent the blood slowly back to my heart. But then the evening air was damp and chill, and my limbs, by the unaccustomed exposure, felt benumbed and dead. I began to fear that I might stiffen in that position, when, luckily, the party moved slowly away.

I opened my eyes and — shut them instantly. In that glance, rapid as lightning, I encountered a pair of full-orbed, blue [illegible]s gazing intently at me from beneath a co-

quettish hat streaming with ribbons that rocked like some fairy boat over a tempestuous sea of golden curls. I dared not look again.

"Ada, Ada! have you fallen in love with the statue?"

"No, I 'm coming!" — and the rustling dress and fairy voice moved away.

I waited in fear and trembling. For the first time I felt unnerved. Had she discovered me? I felt myself already ignominiously expelled from the fatal garden like the sinful Adam — but alas, without the solace of the beautiful Eve. Five minutes passed, I ventured to look again. All was dark. I could hear the singing of voices high up on the garden terrace. — To step from my uneasy elevation by the light of the rising moon, as soon as my cramped limbs would permit, run around to the opposite shore, hurry on my clothes, and through thicket and brake reach the park lodge, was the work of a moment. That night I left the village. That week I left England.

I went to France. I went to Germany. I went to Italy. Three years passed. My imagination and enthusiasm were more under control. I began to think better of society. I had painted several large pictures, allegorical and fanciful, with prominent female figures with blue eyes and golden hair. They were not appreciated. I had painted some portraits for which I was remunerated handsomely, and had amassed an independence. I lived at Florence. I was happy.

The saloons of the Duc de R—— were filled one evening with a pleasant party of painters, sculptors, poets, and authors. I had the *entrée* there, and was formally introduced to a Mr. Willoughby, an English gentleman, who was traveling for his health in company with an only daughter. Our acquaintance ripened into esteem, and calling one evening at my studio to examine the portrait of a mutual friend, he proposed that I should make a picture of his daugh-

was introduced to Ada Willoughby, and she became my sitter.

She was a pretty blonde, with whom three years before, I might have fallen in love at first sight. But a restraint seemed to be over us when together, and I vainly tried to shake off some fanciful recollection with which her pretty face seemed inseparably associated. She was a clever girl, a genial companion, and our tastes assimilated. I painted her features faithfully — the picture was admired — but when I found that, like Raphael's Fornarina, I was apt to introduce some of her features in all my portraits, I came to the conclusion that I was in love with her. The old restraint kept my heart from expression. One day we were walking through one of the galleries when we stopped before an exquisite picture of Pygmalion's transformation. I challenged her faith in the story. She replied simply that it was a "pretty fable." "But if Pygmalion had been a woman and the sculptured figure a man, do you imagine her love could have warmed him to life?" I persisted. She replied that "any woman was a fool to fall in love with the mere physical semblance of a man." Disappointed, but why I did not clearly know, I did not rejoin.

But she was to return to England. I had endeavored to reason myself out of a feeling which was beginning to exert an influence over my future. A party had been formed to visit a villa on the outskirts of the city, and I was to accompany her. The grounds were tastefully adorned; there were groups of statuary, and the never-failing Italian accessories of rills and fountains. A gay party we were, making the alleys ring with laughter. At length Mr. Willoughby, Ada, a few ladies, and myself, seated ourselves by the margin of an artificial lake, from whose centre a trickling fountain sent its spray toward the clear blue sky. The evening was *deliciously cool* and Ada lent her sweet voice to the

rippling water. I had fallen into a reverie, from which I was recalled, accused of unsociability, and taxed to contribute to the amusement of the day.

"Well," said I, "politeness forbade me to sing *before* Miss Willoughby, and prudence forbids my singing *after*. What shall I do?"

"A story, a story," said they.

"What shall it be? Of love or war, or a most 'lamentable comedy'?"

"Oh, a love story," said Ada, "full of fairies, knights, dragons, and disconsolate damsels, — something like your pictures — with lights and shadows — and dark gray masses, and rather vague!"

"With a moral," said papa.

"To hear is to obey," replied I; "I call my story 'The most Mournful and Pathetic Story of the Enchanted Knights, or the Wicked Naiad.'"

An expected pause ensued, and I went on.

"In the days of Fairy dynasty there lived a knight. He was young and adventurous. To him had been given the art of reproducing that which caught his errant fancy, and the true appreciation of the beautiful, without which it has been held all happiness is naught. But from his youth he had been a wanderer, and had fallen in love with a being whose image he met in every lake and fountain, and whose virtues he fully appreciated. In return for his constancy she had bestowed upon him the gifts of unfailing health and strength. One day, in a distant land, he traversed a fair domain, and amid the luxuries of taste and elegance, he found her image still. But she was loved by the great monarch of the domain, who had kept her in secluded privacy. The knight, being headstrong and adventurous, rushed to her forbidden embrace. She received him coldly. The chill of her touch stiffened his limbs and benumbed his faculties. *He felt himself* gradually turning into stone.

Alas! the waters of the lake in which she dwelt held in solution strange minerals, and possessed a petrifying quality. He was found by the monarch and placed on a pedestal, as an example to warn others from a like unlawful intrusion."

"How delightfully obscure!" said Ada.

"Mark the sequel. For a long time he remained in this state; motionless but not senseless, mute but not passionless. The subjects of the monarch passed before him with ironical comments and jests and jeers. He was powerless to reply. But it chanced that a good fairy passed that way. She possessed the power of disarming wicked enchantment and restoring all unnatural changes, for which she repaid herself by making the subject her vassal forever. She bent her luminous eyes on the petrified knight, and their glances melted away the icy torpor which clung to him. Under their genial sunshine his lids opened as a flower, his own eyes reflected back the love that lent him life. He moved and was again a man."

"And of course gave up hydropathy for matrimony," interrupted papa.

I did not answer, for Ada claimed my attention. The blood had climbed step by step into her cheek, and at last the red signal of the success of my stratagem waved from the topmost turret. She looked at me and said nothing, but the look bade me hope.

I need not continue; my story is done. I, of course, managed to have a tête-à-tête with my former acquaintance and generous friend — my new love and charming sitter — before she left for England. What transpired the reader may guess. The only answer I shall transcribe was given some time after the great affirmative which made me forever blessed.

"But, Ada, my darling, how was it that your bright eyes alone detected in the marble statue a living impos*ture?*"

"Why," said Ada, looking saucily into my eyes, "I never before saw a marble statue with a plain gold ring upon its little finger."

So I took the treacherous ornament from my little finger and placed it on her hand.

BOGGS ON THE HORSE[1]

I HATE horses. From the time I first read, "the horse is a noble and useful animal," my youthful skepticism merged into an unconquerable dislike for that useful and noble animal. I have endeavored to overcome the repugnance from a deference to popular opinion, and have not succeeded. I have made peaceful overtures to their indignant "manes," which have been scornfully rejected. Falling back on my natural principles, I hate horses, and am confident the feeling — like most indefinable dislikes — is reciprocal.

I very much doubt whether horses were ever intended for the use of mankind. The Aztecs, a highly intelligent race of people, now unhappily extinct, held the nugatory opinion. I believe the mythological fable of the Centaur to be simply a figurative satire upon a barbarous custom, and the incidents connected with the fall of Troy I have ever looked upon as a typical judgment.

I never could ride, but have envied good riders. It was, however, when I imagined it to be an accomplishment within the range of human acquirement. I am now fully convinced that some men are born riders, as others are born poets, and that a knowledge of equilibrio possessed by the meanest member of the profession, and instinctive in monkeys, is all that is required. If I formerly envied, I now pity such men, and place them on an intellectual level with Mons. Caribmari, who suspends his ridiculous anatomy from a perpendicular pole.

Barring that silly stuff about Pegasus, I do not think horses can be considered poetically. Byron, who sung

[1] *Golden Era*, May 20, 1860.

their praises, on the authority of Lady Blessington, was a snob and cockney in his equine practice; I never heard that Shakespeare — who, you remember, extolled Adonis's horse like a jockey — was a rider, and that absurd individual who wanted but an "Arab steed," as a preliminary to feats of great valor and renown, was, I shrewdly suspect, some low horse-thief or highwayman.

Conscious of this, I might go down to my grave, satisfied with myself and the world, but for a solitary incident embittering the past; an event that never recurs to me without a sigh, a flushed cheek, and accelerated pulse, and a glance at these four white walls of my bachelor apartment as I think how they might once have been changed for the purple hangings of Hymen.

I loved Kate Trotter, and why? Was it that small classical head with little round curls clustering over her alabaster forehead, like purple grapes over a marble wall; that complexion chaste and delicate as the flush of some pink-dyed shell; the frank, daring eye and lithe, sinuous figure, graceful and indolent as a Spanish poem? None of these, though each and all might have melted the heart of an anchorite; but simply because she could ride! Alas, following the magnetic affinity of opposite poles, I loved her for the existence of those qualities which I myself lacked.

We walked and talked together. Our tastes with this one exception were mutual. We talked of books and poetry, and by degrees our theme merged insensibly into the one passionate principle from which the charm of song and minstrelsy had sprung. As a neighbor of the Trotters, my visits were not remarkable, and recognizing, blandly, the prejudices of the paternal Trotter, and gossiping with the maternal Trotter, and suffering the society of the fraternal Trotter, who, gracefully assuming the claims of relationship, borrowed my money and smoked my cigars — I became the admirer of Kate Trotter.

They were happy, blissful days — to sit with her under the friendly shade of the Trotter portico, her soft white hand supporting her dimpled cheek, and straying curls made darker and glossier by the contrast, to hear her sweet contralto voice melting with pathos, or swelling with every line of the spirited page she read, was happiness too ecstatic for duration. I felt it so, and knew that fate was preparing for me a crusher.

For there were moments when my joy was tinged with an indefinable dread. It was when I have watched her, with girlish glee petting and bullying a little agile pony, in my eyes a fiend incarnate, but which she persisted in styling her "bonnie Bess." She always became her equestrian habit, and omitting the ungraceful masculine headpiece, she wore a charming little affair, all fur and feathers, with a grace peculiarly her own. It was a pleasant part of a stroll to doff my hat to her in some shady lane in return for the graceful wave of her riding-whip, and turn and watch the fleeting, graceful figure as she rode by.

It was shortly after meeting her on one of these occasions, that I fixed upon a fatal resolve.

I began to practice equitation secretly. I bought me a horse warranted kind and gentle. He was quite meek and obliging when I bought him, but under my gentle treatment, the innate devil, which I firmly believe animates these brutes to a greater or less degree in proportion to their subjection, gradually developed itself. By dint of hard practice I managed to get up a show of confidence I was far from feeling, and soon became habituated to the dizziness which a mount to the saddle invariably occasioned. I then practiced equestrian exercises at the lonely hours of twilight, in unfrequented and sequestered byroads. My ingenious companion at such times, being too lazy to be actively vicious, assumed a quiet obstinacy which never deserted him. *So I soon discovered that*, with far-seeing equine penetration,

he had fathomed the character of his rider and cherished for him a suitable contempt. An unlooked-for event interrupted my experience. It was just after nightfall after a month's such practice — jogging homeward to the inflexible trot of my noble brute — that I was startled by the rapid clattering of hoofs along the lonely road, and bending all my energies to guiding my horse to the roadside, I looked up just in time to catch the happy glance of Kate's bright eyes and felt the electrical thrill of her riding-dress as she brushed by me.

Well, my secret was out — discerned by her, too, from whom I most wished it concealed. In vain I met the difficulty boldly, and when Kate rallied me on what she called my solitary and selfish amusement, I calmly alluded to the necessity of a regular and limited exercise, as ordered by my physician. Alas! a few days afterward I received a delicately written epistle, in Kate's own dear little hand, inviting me to join a select party of equestrians to the neighboring town of Pumpkinsville, on next Sunday afternoon.

I knew what that "select party" meant. It was Papa Trotter, Mamma Trotter, and Tom Trotter, in whose sublime creation an admirable horse jockey had been spoiled, and a certain Captain Echellon, of the dragoons, — who was disagreeably friendly to Kate, I thought, and a good rider. In the first feeling of mortification which accompanied the perusal of this note, I thought of declining — excuses, indisposition, etc., as I eagerly compared my own unskillfulness with those practiced riders.

Then I half changed my mind. I looked from my window, where my sagacious friend was cropping the tall grass, aud reflected that after all he was not such a bad-looking animal. That I had him (partly) under subjection. Then I flattered myself that my unskillfulness might be overlooked, and resolutely set myself against any unnecessary *display. Latterly,* I thought of Kate. That last was

fruitful subject. I looked forward to the dim future of to-morrow, and saw only myself and Kate riding side by side down a pleasant shadowy lane. We were alone, save the sighing winds and the whispering of leafy boughs; her bridle hanging loosely upon her arm, my hand clasping hers. Heaven knows how far away I might have wandered, but I was awakened from a blissful dream in which Kate reclined in my arms, those ravishing curls nestling in my bosom, and that dear little hat hanging over my shoulder, by the Trotter courier, who requested an answer. Seizing my pen, I hurriedly indited a few irrevocable lines, accepting the invitation, and sealing my destiny forever.

I slept well that night; they say that doomed culprits usually do on the night preceding the fatal day, and I have heard my friend Trigger aver that he has been awakened by his second from a most blissful repose for the morning's conflict. I ate my breakfast and mid-day meal calmly, and bestowing a little extra care on my toilet in view of my reflections of the preceding day (thirty years ago I did not call it vanity), at the appointed hour I mounted my steed and set out for the Trotters'.

It must have been that my beast wanted exercise, for he actually exhibited considerable animation in that short ride. It was, therefore, with a feeling of redoubled assurance that I entered the courtyard where the company were already assembled. I had no eyes for aught but Kate. She looked supremely beautiful. A light blue bodice clasped her lovely waist (as well it might) from which a black riding-skirt fell in graceful folds. I even cast an approving glance on "Bonnie Bess," so had the proximity of her lovely mistress beatified her. We rode out; Trotter, senior and junior, taking the lead; the Captain, who mounted a superb black charger, looking, as I thought, diabolically self-possessed and satisfied, and lastly — blissful arrangement — Kate and myself.

My pen falters at the bare recollection. As we emerged

from that gate, sir, Kate by my side and the gallant Captain before me, my infernal beast stopped. I attempted to urge him on, but to no purpose. Crimson with shame, I frantically applied my whip to his insensible shoulders. He did not move. I might as well have bestrode a whipping-post. He stood there, grim, impassive, immovable as the nightmare, only he was a dreadful fact. I dismounted and the cavalcade halted, my own Kate among them, and eyed me, I felt, critically. I remounted him, and a like scene ensued. I looked appealingly at the elder Trotter.

"He won't go?" said that venerable parent, inquiringly.

"Staky?" said Master Tom.

"Perhaps Mr. Boggs had better let Miss Trotter lead him," said somebody. I looked at Captain Echellon — that gentleman was busy in fixing his stirrup just then, but our eyes met, and we knew we were deadly rivals henceforth and forever.

"Oh, papa! papa! I've just thought of it— it would be a pity to lose any of our company — let Mr. Boggs have Selim; do, pa!" And the dear girl made up an enchanting mouth which might have softened the heart of a chancery lawyer.

The old gentleman eyed me dubiously for a moment, and a half-intelligent, half-suspicious glance passed from father to son as the latter proceeded to obey the paternal command.

In the mean time I proceeded to extricate my beast from Miss Trotter's geraniums, among which he had been impelled by his extraordinary voracity, which was one of his least objectionable qualities — and had silently and sadly removed the saddle when Master Tom reappeared leading my intended charger.

I looked at him anxiously; I know nothing of the points of a horse, and detest the mention of such details as flank, fetlock, pastern, gambrel, etc. I did not look at anything but *his face, and as I looked* I made up my mind to lose a leg

or arm for Miss Trotter. His eyes had a dim, forge-like glow, and revolved in eccentric orbits, with occasional white flashes of heat lightning, but with a fixed expression of deviltry that their wanderings could not conceal. "He is gay," said Master Tom; "feels his oats, and you have but to hold his head up and let him slide." I mounted him carefully, Master Tom holding his head, and he acknowledged the act by a sinuous, snake-like contraction of the dorsal muscles, which at once had the effect of destroying whatever preconception I might have had of the solidity of the saddle. I then followed my charmer out of the gate with the solemnity of a chief mourner. We had not proceeded many rods before the exuberant gayety of Selim manifested itself with most marked and painful distinctness. First he proceeded up the road sideways, occasionally preferring the green path to the dusty road; then he displayed the most charming hesitation, backing from Trotter senior to Trotter junior; then he persisted in carrying his head up and his tail down, and then changing his mind he surveyed the road, backward, from between his fore legs.

It was a hot day. I at least supposed so, for the perspiration rolled down my cheeks as I worked away at my cursed brute. Kate directed a few words to me, in hope, dear girl, to change the current of my thoughts, but I had no devotion for anything but the vicious quadruped beneath me. She finally joined the Captain ahead. Master Tom attended me, occasionally issuing orders, as to "holding his head," and "giving him the spur," and otherwise "putting it to him," but he soon rode forward, and I was left alone with my four-footed devil. Whatever love I might have had for the dear girl who had thus placed me in this diabolical situation had vanished when I mounted the malevolent Selim.

So I watched her retreating figure with a dogged feeling *of dislike, and saw* her bending to the gallant Captain's

compliments; then my fear grew wrath, and my wrath waxed fierce.

I dashed my spurs into the sides of the revolting beast, who acknowledged the act by two or three bounds, which brought my heart to my throat and my head between his ears, and Kate — Oh, Kate — turning back, looked at me and laughed! Had it been a smile, a tender smile, such as love may wear, — had it been arch or playful, — but a laugh at such a moment, a distinct, palpable grin, an audible cachinnation, was too much for my excited nerves.

I had the remembrance of that laugh in my "mind's eye" long after she and her companions had disappeared at the entrance of the green lane which led to the pleasant town of Pumpkinville. I and Selim were alone.

I checked him gently, and walked along the green sod, my mind occupied with horrid thoughts of vengeance on the Captain, and incomprehensible hatred for Kate. Perhaps the stillness of the warm summer air and the absence of embarrassing spectators caused me to make a last attempt at gaining the mastery of my quadrupedal enemy. To go back I could not; to go forward in my present condition, impossible; and so, gathering the reins and the remnants of my self-possession, braced myself for a final struggle.

I sunk the spur into his flank rowel-deep, at the same moment bringing down the whip over his haunches. He balanced himself for a single instant on his hind legs, gave a sickening leap, and the next moment was off like a sky rocket.

The first shock threw me forward on his neck, and grasping his mane with both hands, I dropped the hollow mockery of a whip, and clung to him as the shipwrecked mariner clings to a tossing spar. The stones flew from the track and the fences twinkled by us as the clattering hoofs trampled down the road. I had no control over him, but I did not expect to, and was prepared for the worst.

But, oh, not such a dénouement! We had already rushed into the wooded lane with the speed of an express train, which was momentarily increasing, for the reckless combination of bone and sinew beneath was beginning to "feel his oats" with a vengeance.

Not far ahead of us the Captain and Kate were riding together. The road was narrow, scarcely permitting two to ride abreast, and was fenced to keep out the rank underbrush. I comprehended the danger instantly, but was powerless to help them; my shout would not have been heard in time, and I was too much exhausted for a protracted effort of any kind. They did not hear me till we were upon them. I saw the Captain hurriedly rein in his steed, and his placid, self-satisfied expression gave way to a look of alarm. I saw the blood depart from poor Kate's cheek and her happy smile vanish as she urged her Bonnie Bess forward. I remember experiencing a wicked satisfaction as Selim and I dashed down upon the gallant Captain. The shock was terrific. The Captain was a good rider, his steed a gallant one, but Selim "felt his oats," and down they went, rider and horse, at my resistless charge, and Selim, with a neigh like a trumpet call, sped onward. And now I was at Kate's side. Bonnie Bess was doing her best, but I swept past them. There was a momentary struggle; I felt myself entangled in the folds of Kate's riding-skirt. My heart grew sick as the poor girl was almost dragged from the saddle as she clung in terror to her pony's mane; but, thank God! strings are fragile and hooks and eyes will break, and I shot ahead at last with the poor thing's riding-skirt fluttering entire — a trophy of victory — from my dangling stirrup!

I had expected a fatal termination to this day's mishaps; and after this last catastrophe I looked upon death, — utter annihilation, — as a welcome relief. I was destined to another mortal shame, however, for as Selim and I, with unabated speed, entered the long street of Pumpkinville, I heard a

faint familiar voice imploring me to stop. I looked around and — Oh, why did n't the earth open a terrible pitfall in my cursed brute's track! — there was Kate, poor Kate, scarce a length behind me, Bonnie Bess putting her best foot foremost and perfectly uncontrollable, with her blushing mistress cowering over her mane, and striving, oh! how vainly, to cover her pretty ankles, with her all too abbreviated — well, I must say it — petticoat.

Church had just been dismissed, and the youth, beauty, and fashion of Pumpkinville lounged down its one broad street. The Reverend Jedediah Higgins, his wife and six lovely daughters, were standing at the church door; the parson engaged in post-sermonial explanation, the daughters consoling themselves for three hours' past vacuity, by the most violent flirtation with youthful Pumpkinvillians. I closed my eyes as I swept by the sacred edifice, and wished myself quietly "inurned" in one of the grassy vaults beside it. I dared not look at Kate, but oh, they did!

The Pumpkinville hotel affords entertainment for man and beast. There were a number of both species scattered about its vicinity. I remember Papa and Mamma Trotter rushing out frantically as we dashed up to the horse trough at the door. I am not quite certain, but I think I won the race down the Pumpkinville road about a length. I remember nothing more until I was found the next morning lying in my bed — drunk.

I was some time recovering. When I got able to be out, I found a challenge from Captain Echellon lying on my table. Unless some person connected with the establishment has removed it, it lies there yet.

I never saw Kate afterward.

I have not ridden since.

Ten years after, walking down Broadway, my attention was attracted by a crowd of people standing around an omnibus *that blocked* up the thoroughfare. Making my way

through the crowd, I found that one of the horses had been vicious and uncontrollable, and had now persistently refused to budge an inch. He was a wicked-looking brute, standing over the omnibus pole, surveying the crowd with a dogged look, while two men were engaged in beating him over the head with clubs. I think some foolish persons endeavored to interfere. Why did I suddenly dash forward, seize the weapon from the assailant's hand, and myself frantically break it over the animal's devilish forehead? In that moment, sir, I saw only retribution and my old never-to-be-forgotten enemy and blaster of all my happiness on earth, the incorrigible Selim. I was avenged.

STORY OF THE REVOLUTION[1]

AN INCIDENT IN THE LIFE OF MY GREAT-UNCLE

He was a Van Doozle. As a descendant of that ancient family, I may assert, without unbecoming pride, that to be a Van Doozle signified, in the days of which I write, something and somebody. The Van Doozles, in 1779, were a Dutch family, residing somewhere between New York and Albany, on the Hudson, and my great-grand-uncle was an only son.

Great men are usually indebted to circumstances and great events for their elevation. The French Revolution brought forth a Napoleon; our own Revolution a Washington and Van Doozle. It is true that in this latter illustration, one was commander-in-chief in the American army and the other only a sergeant in the same; yet the subordinate, to every reflective man, fulfilled his duty as well as his superior. I do not wish to detract from the well-merited fame of George Washington, but as a descendant of the hero of this tale, I cannot allow the ashes of oblivion to be heaped upon the memory of Yont Van Doozle, sergeant in the Continental forces, but particularly attached to that regiment of cavalry known as Lee's Legion.

Every American has heard of the Legion. Scouting the eastern bank of the Hudson, they were a formidable check upon the ravages of "cowboys" and "rangers" over that country lying between White Plains and New York City, known as the "Neutral Ground." The insecurity of property, through the boldness of some of these predatory excursions, extending into the little Dutch settlements, ren-

[1] *Golden Era*, July 8, 1860.

dered the presence of an armed force particularly desirable, and the fame of these dashing dragoons quite won over the hearts of the honest Dutch farmers, and tended materially to open their larders to the wants of a sympathizing ally, in preference to the claims of an insulting foe.

My ancestor was stationed with his company in a certain quiet, dreary, gable-ended, weather-cock-crowned village, abutting on a swelling bay of the Hudson, which may still be seen, but, alas! for modern innovation, hardly recognized. Time has crumbled the most remarkable landmarks. Prosperity has erected on their ruins divers shingle palaces, and the well-known crow-stepped gables are replaced by the introduction of cottages *ornés*, Greek villas, mediæval castles, and other fatal hallucinations of vulgar minds and an overtasked architectural fancy.

On the principal street, the principal mansion, in the good old days, was occupied by one Jacob Bogardus, better known as "Yop" Bogardus. He was a man of strictly neutral politics. When the Cowboys favored him with their attentions and pressed his hospitality, he was known to declaim loudly against the ragmuffins of the Tory King; when cavalry scouts from above recruited themselves at his expense, he was much incensed against the Yankees, whom he consigned to "der tuyful," and implored the protection of St. Nicholas against friends who lacked that all essential requisite, disinterestedness. But he was possessed of two redeeming peculiarities which rendered his acquaintance profitable to the old and desirable to the young — he was rich and had a pretty daughter. Alas! the riches have since taken to themselves wings, and a certain miniature in ivory, by a Low Dutch artist, still in the possession of my family, is the only memento of the beauty of sixteen. I wish my pen were pliant enough to follow the curves of that plump little bodiced and short-petticoated figure, or paint, *in anything but* black and white, her rosy face and hazel

eyes. Ah me, it 's no wonder my uncle loved her, although she was suspected of sympathy with the good cause in which Yont had embarked — but I think that he thought more of other interests than his country's in their confidential intercourse. Young men were foolish in those days, and if it "tried men's souls," their hearts sometimes suffered likewise.

Katrina Bogardus was a horrible coquette. In all their confidential intercourse she had never given my great-uncle any definite encouragement, not even the tip of her rosy finger to kiss. He caught occasional glances, very expressive, but not capable of perpetuation. She flirted easily with others, and took particular pains to do so in my great-uncle's presence. When taken to task by him she would pout pettishly, and ask him if she had n't a right to do as she liked — young men in such times should have something else to do than notice what other young men said to young women. She was sure she did n't care, however. She had n't asked him to love her — in fact she did n't believe that he did, — and finally when the poor fellow prostrated himself in abject submission to the little Dutch divinity, she would place her little foot (metaphorically) on his neck and keep him there.

But the exquisite pleasure of torturing a lover, like all human enjoyments, should be ruled by temperance. Katrina, with woman's tact, knew just how far to go, and leave my great-uncle in the terrible perplexity of not knowing whether his own conduct was not a sufficient justification for hers. But she once overstepped the mark. And one night, on the 25th of June, 1780, my great-uncle "might have been seen," as your novelist would have it, to rush frantically from the house, clap his hat over his eyes, give his beard a fierce pull, mount his fiery steed, and driving in the spur, gallop away like a madman.

I 'm sure I don't know what happened. The house was

lit up, and Pompey's fiddle might have been heard from the parlor, while the frequent sound of laughter betokened a merry-making within. But my great-uncle was excitable. And when you take into consideration the fact that Katy Bogardus was in the glory of her beauty and coquetry, and looked supremely bewitching, that she had received several proposals that evening, that a perfect tempest of sighs raged from the pent-up bosoms of comely young farmers, that she flirted indiscriminately, and had been sweetly unconscious of the presence of my great-uncle, you may possibly account for his irregular proceeding. I think I should not have acted so, nor would you; but young men in 1780 were very different from young men in 1860. You and I would have flirted with some one else — "smiled" and looked on with indifference. Unfortunately my ancestor was as incapable of concealing a real passion as he was of affecting an artificial one. Such was the sad effect of inexperience and a country life.

A fierce gallop tends to relieve a man's mind. My great-uncle experienced some solace in driving his spurs into his mare's side by way of revenge for the gaping wounds in his own. He made up his mind he would leave *her* — leave his corps if he had to desert — he would join Sumter in the South — he would forever banish all remembrance of the fatal witchery, and would seek, yes, seek, a soldier's grave. For my great-uncle, though fully convinced that Katrina was unworthy of his regard, saw nothing without her but misery and death. He looked out upon the swelling river that rolled placidly below him; at the opposite shore, with its high promontory casting a long shadow over the sparkling water like a dark bridge that spanned the stream — and halted. He looked at the village — and sighed.

A sound of oars "cheeping" in row-locks caught his ear. *He was in that frame* of mind that any occurrence to change

the current of his thoughts was a reprieve, and he listened eagerly. Then, as the sound became more sensible, he saw a boat approaching the shore below him. He remembered a bridle-path, somewhat circuitous and steep, that led from the river below to where he had unconsciously halted. There were two men seated in the stern of the boat, wrapped in military cloaks. A third was pulling. They reached the embankment. My ancestor looked at the flints of his pistols, and returned them cocked to his holsters. All this in a state of mechanical expectancy he could not account for.

He did not wait long, for presently two figures appeared slowly mounting the bank, which he at once recognized as the strangers of the boat. They were conversing earnestly. My great-uncle was not remarkably bright, but it struck him that the two strangers had important business, to have crossed the river at that hour; that they were *strangers*, and that it was his duty, as sergeant in Lee's Legion to inquire their business. So spurring his mare forward, as they reached the level of the cliff, he interposed his somewhat athletic figure and called on them to "halt."

They did so, but more in astonishment than fear. It gave my redoubtable ancestor a chance to examine them keenly. Hem! A tall, dark young man, black-eyed and aristocratic-looking — a gentleman. A middle-aged man, with a face rather old, but massive and energetic; a dignified chap — some white ruffles on his sleeve, and a semi-military style — a gentleman also. My great-uncle felt a strong desire to pitch into the slim young man by virtue of his personal appearance, but was n't quite so certain about the other.

The younger stepped promptly forward, and, with a supercilious air, which annoyed my ancestor excessively, demanded: —

"*Who are you* that stay travelers on the open road?

What authority have you to address strangers? Fall back, sir!"

My ancestral relative kept his eye on the spokesman and replied, simply: —

"My name is Yont Van Doozle. I am a sergeant in Colonel Lee's cavalry. Here is my authority." And he produced the shining barrel of a pistol from his holster.

The young stranger laid his hand upon his sword and stepped impulsively, his dark face darker grew, and his thin cheek lay close against his clenched teeth; but the elder laid his ruffled hand gravely upon the young man's arm and turned to my great-uncle: —

"Do you not know, sir, that this is neutral ground?"

"Aye, I do," said my great-uncle, "but the times are troublous; it behooves all friends of the cause I profess, to be wary. You are strangers, and your attire shows you are not of us. You cannot pass until you have given me your name, your rank, and your business."

This my great-uncle always thought was the neatest and most emphatic speech he had ever made. He drew himself up in his stirrups, after it, keeping his eye fixed on the slim fellow, and calculating that the clasp of his military cloak would be a good mark in case of emergency. The dark young man placed his hand upon his sword, and played with his fingers upon the hilt, with the air of a pianoforte player, who knew something about the instrument. The elder one again interposed, and conversed for a moment earnestly with his companion, who once more turned to my great-uncle: —

"We are two to your one. If we choose, your opposition would be a slight barrier. If we see fit to comply with your demand, what reason have we to believe your *rank*, your *name?* You may be a Ranger, a Cowboy. Your manners," added the young man, in his disagreeable *way, "rather indicate* the latter!"

For a moment my great-uncle boiled over. For a moment he thought of pistoling the slim fellow and cleaving down the stout one, and then — he would be wounded, mortally wounded, of course — he would drag himself back, covered with blood, to Bogardus's house, let *her* know that he had killed two Tory officers, and saved his country, and die in *her* hard-hearted, pitiless presence. But he recovered his temper and his tongue at the same moment.

"I am rough," said he, with a voice a little tremulous, but a steady, kindling eye; "I am rough, I know, but if I lie at such a moment, I am the first of my family who have disgraced their name. If I am willing to believe *you*, a *stranger*, you should be as mindful of *me*, who dwell here upon the ground you trespass on."

The elder stranger stepped forward, and holding out his hand, said, in a stately, dignified way. "Your hand, friend; we have wronged you. I believe you, as does my friend. Your curiosity shall be satisfied, and Colonel Lee shall know the worth of his honest sergeant."

He again held converse with his young companion, who again turned to my great-uncle: —

"You have asked our names, rank, and business. I am Alexander Hamilton, Secretary to the Continental Congress." My uncle started. "Hamilton, the aide-de-camp of—"

He could only stammer out, "And your friend?"

"Your general — George Washington."

The excitement, and possibility of a dangerous conflict, which my great-uncle fondly hoped would terminate fatally for him, had kept up his courage and spirits. That last hope gone, and the horror which the loyal fellow felt at the sacrilege he had contemplated on the person of his beloved leader, crushed him completely. He could only return his pistol to its holster, and hang his head in very shame.

Colonel Hamilton resumed — "Our business must be kept secret. The general, however, has seen fit to partly confide its execution to you, as the lesson you have taught us has convinced us of the indiscretion of pursuing it further in person. You will wait here for an hour. A young lad will come to this spot by that time, and you will inform him that you are commissioned by me to see him in safety to the opposite shore. A boat will be in readiness. He will return in an hour, and you will guard him in safety back. Remember that you are to press him with no questions. Keep your own counsel and you shall be suitably rewarded. Good-night, Sergeant Van Doozle." And, with a military salute, the young man and his leader retraced their steps toward the river.

My uncle again revived his wonted energies. He dismounted, tied his horse to a neighboring tree, and seating himself by the roadside, waited the termination of his adventure. He sighed sometimes deeply; and, of course, you know what he was thinking about. Do what he would the past was constantly before him. The massive and dignified features of his great leader melted away to give place to a certain dimpled face with round chin and hazel eyes. Poor fellow! And when at the end of the hour he saw some one approaching, he almost started forward with the name of Katrina upon his lips. It was only the boy — a chubby young fellow of about fourteen or fifteen, with an awkward, constrained air, and a face completely muffled in a large scarf. He briefly and almost surlily repeated his commission, and led the way to the riverside. He was so occupied with his previous thoughts that he did not notice the startled gesture of the boy at the sound of his voice, or the faint sigh that escaped him as he passively followed my sturdy ancestor.

Once within the boat, my great-uncle seated himself at the [redacted] his young charge, while the

boatman rapidly pulled across the shining expanse. Moonlight only adds sorrowful reflections to a despairing lover, and my great-uncle looked gloomily over the side. Once the poor lad turned with an inquiring gesture toward him, but Sergeant Yont answered the movement by turning his back upon him; "I'm no prying Yankee, they 'll find," said my great-uncle to himself, in response to the remembered injunction.

The hour passed quickly on the opposite side; on their return, a similar silence ensued. My great-uncle conducted the young lad up the river-bank, and for the first time during this strange interview the silence was broken.

"You have been kind to me," said the lad, timidly, but in a pleasant, musical voice. "You have been kind to me, and have fulfilled your duty of guardian well. Let me know your name, that I may know whom to remember in my prayers."

There was a slight dash of wickedness in the speech, which my uncle—who was conscious of having behaved like a great brute — could not help noticing.

He colored slightly, and answered, in a desponding tone: —

"It's no matter, no matter, we shall in all probability never meet again. I leave here to-morrow. Farewell, young sir; I have done but my duty. If I have done it poorly or rudely, pardon me; I meant no harm." And the poor fellow extended his hand.

But the lad fell back a step, and placed his hand upon his breast, which trembled with its burthen. A slight spasm seemed to agitate him, and when it passed, his voice trembled as he asked: "But why, are you not in the Legion?"

"I shall be no longer; I leave here to-morrow. Good-night!" And he turned away.

"Stay," *interrupted* the lad, "one moment. You refuse

to give me your name! I know it! I shall never forget it! Good-bye, Yont Van Doozle, and God bless you!"

My great-uncle turned. As he did so, I am sure I cannot tell why, but the scarf fell from the young lad's neck and face, and a multitude of glossy curls somehow shook out of his cap, which fell off in the general confusion and disarrangement of his toilet. My great-uncle jumped six feet forward, exclaiming: —

"Katrina!"

"Yont!"

I should feel myself impertinent to describe the rest of that interview. I should do violence to the reader's judgment and penetration, if I stopped to say how it was that Katrina had been the faithful ally of the American leader, and how, from her father's neutrality and her own popularity, she had gained the most valuable information from all sources — Cowboy and Ranger; — and how, in her odd disguise, she had faithfully kept the American chief informed of the movements of hostile parties below; how, in short, she was the most charming and complete spy in petticoats the world had ever known — and how her innocence and purity was acknowledged by the great general, who guarded her on these interviews with a father's care, and how she informed my great-uncle of this with many blushes, pouts, and prettinesses, till the poor fellow was half crazy.

And now you know, too, or can guess, how that miniature came into the legitimate possession of our family.

A CHILD'S GHOST STORY[1]

THERE was once a child whom people thought odd and queer. He was a puny little fellow. The only thing big about him was his head, and that was so disproportioned to the rest of his body, that some people laughed when they saw him. And to complete his grotesqueness, his parents, who were very learned people — and foolish as very learned people sometimes are — gave him a strange, queer name, "Poeta," which meant a great deal, so they said; but his old nurse and his little sister called him "Etty," which meant only that they loved him, and which I think was a great deal more pleasant, if not as sensible.

Not but that his parents were very proud of his peculiarities and queer ways. But they were very severe and strict with him. He deserved it, for he was fretful, peevish, and impatient. He imagined continually that people did n't love him as he would like them to, which was partly the case; and he was moody and querulous sometimes; and instead of trying to find out why, and what could be done to help it, he would lie down in his little crib and hate everybody. And then his big head, which was always bothering him, would ache dreadfully.

But when he strayed into the green fields with his little sister, who could tell better than "Etty" what the birds said to each other, what the lëäves of the big elms were always whispering, and the strange stories that the brook babbled to the stones as it ran away to the distant sea? And although he was not strong enough to play like larger boys with these things, he was fond of lying under the big

[1] *Golden Era*, August 12, 1860.

elm, with his little sister supporting his head on her lap, watching all this, and telling her about it and many other wonderful things.

But I am sorry to say that he would sometimes tell very queer and strange stories; he would tell of goblins as high as the elm, and of ghosts that haunted the little churchyard where their grandmother slept; and he would continue to repeat them, getting more and more terrifying in intensity, until his little "Gracie" would open her big blue eyes in pretty terror, and catch his gesticulating hand.

"There now, Etty, dear," she once said, "I don't believe there are any ghosts."

"Is n't there," said Etty, in deep scorn.

"No! Did you ever see any, Etty?"

(This was another sort of thing, you know, and poor Etty could n't say that he had, but he was confident that other people had seen them.)

"Well," said Gracie, "I don't believe there are any. I know that dead people lie in their graves and make the grass grow; but if I die, I 'll come back to you and be a ghost."

And so to these little children, the seasons were told over in flowers and fruits and different games; and it was kite time, and the lilacs were in blossom, when a great hush and quiet fell upon their home. People walked about whispering to each other, and Etty was kept alone in a room until he was frightened and his head ached. But then Gracie did not come to him to console him. And when he could not stand it any longer he crept into a little bedroom, from which an awe seemed to spread over the whole house, and there was a smell of mignonette, and something white lying on the bed, and on top of that again a pinched little white face that he knew. And Etty cried.

His sister had died in early spring, and now it was the *season when the* rosy-cheeked apples are piled away in the

barn, and the red leaves in the corners of the lane, and the nights were getting chilly, and Etty, whose health was poor, was lying in his crib watching the bright fire, thinking of the flowers that had passed away, when something soft and cool stole over his face and rested upon his forehead. It was a little hand — Gracie's, and Gracie stood beside him.

He remembered what she had told him, and knew it was Gracie's ghost and he was not frightened. But he whispered to her, and she soothed his aching head, and told him that when he was weary, and his head ached, she would come to him again, and that she was permitted to visit him only that she might soothe him when in trouble and keep him from harm. This and much more she whispered to him in the quiet little nursery, and at last holding her hand in his, he fell asleep.

He did not dare to tell his father or mother, or the people about him, of Gracie's ghost. He knew they would look upon it as one of his peculiarities and he dreaded their disbelief. He did not dare to tell it to the Reverend Calvin Choakumchild, who gave him a great many very nice tracts, and talked to him a good deal about the "Holy Ghost." He did not dare to tell it to Betsy, his nurse, who had frightened him often with hobgoblins and spectres. So he laid away his little secret in a quiet shelf in his memory, just as *her* toys had been put away in a corner of the great cupboard.

But Etty grew up a man and strong and well proportioned. His head no longer seemed to him so large, and people did not laugh at him. His old name gave place to Mr. So-and-So. But when he would get weary, his head would ache as it did when he was a boy, and the doctors, many of whom had D.D. written to their name, could do him no good. How welcome, then, was Gracie's ghost, and her cool, soft *touch, and her* whispered words.

But he fell into wicked courses and among wicked me

And when his head would ache, as it often did from dissipation and excesses, he did not dare to invoke in such company Gracie's ghost. So he fell sick and grew worse, and at last the doctors gave him up.

At the close of a bright spring day when he lay tossing upon his bed, she came and placed her hand upon his head; the dull throbbing and feverish heat passed away. He heard the whispering of the leaves of the old elm again, and the birds talking to each other, and even the foolish talk of the brook. It was saying, "He is coming." And then with his hand holding one of Gracie's, and her other upon his forehead, he floated out with the brook toward the distant, distant sea.

Children, have you ever seen "Gracie's ghost"?

FACTS CONCERNING A MEERSCHAUM[1]

I FIRST saw it in possession of my bosom friend Puffer, on his return from the Continent.

I was a hard-reading lawyer's clerk then on a small, and — as I thought — inadequate, salary. I had quite a talent in the legal way — having debated successfully at old Bedevillem's Institute, where I gained my astute knowledge of the world, since a classical budding of the young idea enables it to shoot much more perfectly. It was my parents' intention to fit me for the bar — for which purpose I devoted a greater part of my time to hard reading. I read Story and Scott, Coke and Cooper, Blackstone and Bulwer, and a great many other eminent jurists and novelists. It will be perceived that I endeavored to combine the practical and imaginative, and I would recommend that plan to other young men about to take up a profession. It has its faults, however, owing to perversity of the youthful student to display the lightest on the surface, and although he may yet hold the law of those revered jurists fixed in his memory, he is apt to apply the argument of the novelist thereon — which, though ingenious and entertaining, is, I believe, not considered authority.

As this is a moral episode, I may be pardoned one more egotistical confession. At this, and in fact at an earlier period, I was troubled with a besetting sin of imitation. I was continually assuming other people's habits, and adopting other people's peculiarities. As another of my proclivities was not to imitate anything good, it is some consolation to reflect that most of my faults were other people's.

Is it any wonder, then, that finding Puffer a metaphy-

[1] *Golden Era*, September 9, 1860.

sician, I became a transcendentalist; or that, seeing his meerschaum, I became convinced that cigars were but half-measures and that the meerschaum was the true source of inspiration for a student? Of course not. I coveted Puffer's meerschaum; and when one day Puffer said to me: "B., friend of my soul, that meerschaum's yours," I was happy. In imitation of his impulsive foreign style, I fell upon his neck and kissed both his cheeks.

It was a most delectable instrument, large and exquisitely formed — for some German student had expended upon it, between the intervals of hard study, his artistic skill in carving. The bowl was small and goblet-shaped, supported by a round-limbed caryatid — it might have been an Indian girl or some Cleopatrashy female — tinct with the dusky juices of the herb. I did not remark it then — but it was none of your new, highly polished, waxen-surfaced affairs, with a superficial *parvenu* glitter; but old and respectable, stained through and through with the coliected juices of half a century. For such a pipe a man might renounce his religion — his mistress; to have created such, he might have willingly entailed upon his children shattered nerves, lustreless eyes, and clouded intellects.

When I took the green shagreen case home, I met Dolly, my landlady's daughter, at the foot of the stairs. Between Dolly and myself some acquaintance existed. I looked upon Dolly with that disinterested feeling which metaphysical young men with vivid imaginations usually bestow upon young and pretty women. I had no doubt that Dolly, who was practical and red-lipped, looked up at me from her every-day level with the profound respect that my transcendental turn of mind, superior attainments, and indefinable longings demanded. But I did not want Dolly to see the pipe. I knew that in her practical way she would regard it simply *in the sense* of tobacco, and possibly object to it. So when [redacted]*mall* gaiters occupying the centre of a periphery

of lace edging, on a level with my eyes, I concealed the coveted treasure in my bosom, and reaching my room locked the door, and prepared to give myself up to metaphysics and Puffer's meerschaum.

The filling and lighting of a pipe is an operation which should exclude all indecorous haste. A moment's carelessness or trifling on the part of the smoker — a hurried or reckless packing of the weed at the insertion of the cherry stem — produces asthmatic laboring, phthisis, and not unfrequently asphyxia and extinction of the vital spark. The would-be smoker protracts a lingering, wheezing existence, and his pipe at last goes out. I filled Puffer's meerschaum with the genuine Latakia (manufactured in Connecticut) carefully and deliberately, lit it, and applied my lips to the amber mouthpiece. You, O tobacco-loving reader, know the rapture of that first draught — the strange, indefinable thrill which pervades your very being; the delicious absorption of that infinitesimal drop of nicotina, following your veins from your fingers' ends to the toes of your boots. Talk of an infant at the breast; the shipwrecked mariner squeezing the wet canvas in his mouth; the Arabia Petraean traveler transported to Arabia Felix at a well — anything in the way of a first draught, and they 're but weak comparisons. I drew a rocking-chair toward the window, threw myself in it at the national position, contemplated the toes of my slippers, and smoked Puffer's meerschaum.

It wanted but a few moments of twilight. From my windows I could see the round red sun modestly pulling a fleecy blanket over him as he sank to rest. The noises of the city came to me hushed and mellowed. I noticed that irregular rhythmical beat — so often spoken of — of that vast human sea which welled through the angular channels of the great metropolis below my eyrie on Russian Hill. But the fog was steadily pulling through the clefts and passes of the sand *hills, encompassing* the city like the Assyrian hosts [illegible]

MY OTHERSELF[1]

A GERMAN-SILVER NOVEL

THE exercise of apperception gives a distinctiveness to idiocracy, which is, however, subjective to the limits of ME. Thus: If I consider myself individually as an individual, I segregate my personality from humanity, which being objective to my individuality as an individual, is necessarily idiosyncratic.

. . . . . .

I consider the above as a very neat exposition of my condition. I can't say that it is entirely original. I stole some of the ideas from Puffer (he that gave me the meerschaum I told you about the other day). The lucid style he acquired by reading Leibnitz and other dreamy Teutons. Puffer — although I say it who am his friend — is in point of fact immense.

When he told me that horrid story about the German student who saw a duplicate of himself walk home one night, and never dared to enter his house a fortnight afterward, — which I dare say you have heard before, — I was sorely troubled. The fact of it is, Puffer has such an agreeable way of telling such dreadful things, in a muffled voice as he goes away at night after a visit to my room, that he leaves a large stock of material on hand for nightmares, horrid dreams, and such things. And then, I had some experience of my own on the subject I speak of that I did not want to tell him.

So I thought of telling you, and to give it due solemnity I constructed that paragraph I called your attention to. If

[1] *Golden Era*, September 30, 1860.

you have no taste for metaphysics and would n't mind a little sentiment instead, we 'll drop Leibnitz and Puffer for a while.

My acquaintances, generally, look upon me as a mild dyspeptic, governed according to the philosophy of Henry Buckle by bodily sympathies; and rather a quiet, ladylike young man. Just so. But I have another self they know nothing about — a brilliant healthy fellow, with huge lungs; a little given to romance and enthusiasm, who requires all my care and attention to keep him out of mischief. It was my otherself, who, when I received castigation at an early age, ran away from home and immediately found a Desert Island where he lived afterward very happily with his man Friday. *I* remained with my aunt Jemima and got more lickings. It was O. S. who half killed the tyrannical old schoolmaster, while *I* sat quietly by and conjugated the verbs, to be, to do, and to suffer. It was O. S. who bearded old Fantadling and ran away with Mary Fantadling, while *I*, years afterward, saw her married to some old muff and danced at her wedding. Do you think that such a brilliant high-souled fellow as my otherself would have stood by and allowed such a heinous sacrifice of Mary, whom I loved? No, sir. Never! O. S. was self-sacrificing, too, on occasion. When I had oranges sent to me at school my otherself crept up to the dormitory and gave them to poor Dick who was ill with the fever. I did n't. Greedy little glutton that I was, I gorged myself with them. I remember somebody was sick afterward. It must have been *me*. It was my otherself who made that cutting and witty retort when J. F. expressed his opinion that I was a Muggins. *I* only said, "You 're another," or words to that effect. In short, it was my otherself who was always witty, grand, noble, chivalrous, self-sacrificing, magnanimous, and successful. Not *me*.

If a fellow had another self, ought he to be contented with *one wife*? *Don't* flatter yourself that your questio

is new or funny. That 's been said before. But you will find it partly answered in these pages.

Some years ago, in the Atlantic States, my chronic weakness became intensified at the climatrical period, and obliged me to seek pure oxygen, and gather raw iodine at the seaside. The physician who percussed my chest and felt my pulse, looking at me with grave, quiet eyes but a pleasant, assuring smile, told me to *forget myself* as much as possible for the next four weeks, and parted from me with a quiet shake of the hand.

I went to the seaside. Where? Oh, I 'm not going to tell you. You have been there very likely or may go, and then you may find out that the circumstances I tell you are exaggerated. Enough for you to know that it had the usual great house, with the smell of thousands of dead and gone dinners flavoring the wide walls and passages. With piazzas and colonnade, with the white paint so cold and ghastly in the moonlight, and so hot in the sunlight, and on the windward side beginning to grow sere and yellow, and fretted of mornings with little saline crystals from the sharp salt air. There were the half-dozen pretty girls and numberless nice young women, whose white skirts filled the piazzas and the parlor; who sang and flirted and danced the "German," and charged as a Light Brigade of "Lancers" and fluttered away with their colored pennons to carry havoc and destruction elsewhere. There was the usual little routine of daily enjoyments, entered into with business regularity; the bath, the ride, the walk, the bowling-alley, dinner, hop. How dost thou like the picture?

I set about trying to forget myself. I tried not to think that I was a weak invalid, and forgot to feel my pulse the next morning, after arrival. I interested myself secretly in people. Having a nice little skeleton of my own tucked away in room No. 1199, I cultivated a taste for other people's. I knew why the lovely Miss M—— did not take

her accustomed ride with Washington Jinks the other day after that sun-burned and queer-looking customer arrived. I knew why young Whipper-Snapper came up post-haste from the city, and why poor Miss Whipper-Snapper's eyes were red the next morning, and her cruel "pa" bundled her off to the city. I knew why the fascinating Miss J—— was so brilliant and light-hearted; and what she was trying to drown and blot out forever in the gay whirl of excitement. And that wicked thing that young Rattler told me about Miss Fanny,—ah, my dear madam, your sex are not the only beings who cauterize reputation,— but I 'm not going to tell you that, although it 's infinitely better than anything in this story. Let us go back to our sheep, which are not all black, thank goodness!

Well, I was sitting upon the piazza with one foot upon one of the columns, and my other leg over the balusters (bannisters is the pronunciation of that region), when the hotel stage drew up with some additional visitors. A number got down, but one of them *alighted.* I use the latter expression as imperfectly conveying the manner in which she fluttered out of the stage as you have seen a canary come out of the door of a cage. She might have had wings, but they were flattened down under a gray traveling-cloak. I did not see them, but as she passed me, her brown veil lifted, and I saw her young face. There!— I 'm not going to describe her. If you should ever see her album, you 'll find it done very prettily. There are some verses in the September number of the *Young Woman's Magazine* of the year 185–, illustrative of her perfections, signed "B." And perhaps you might not think her pretty. There 's my young friend D——, whose taste is good, differs from me, but every one knows that he raves altogether about golden hair since that unfortunate affair he had with the youngest Miss Midas.

Most people would have gone to the office regis[redacted]

picked out her name, and that of her aunt, who was with her. That was altogether too practical; besides, it would have involved me in the necessity of giving it in full in these pages. I preferred to follow her upstairs after a decent interval, and lounge carelessly along the passages. Presently I saw the gray traveling-dress kneeling before a large trunk in front of an open door. The trunk was almost big enough to hold the darling herself. As I passed by she looked up. There have been one or two pairs of eyes that I have seen in my life that have magnetized me — I don't know whether hers did — but I 'll tell you what I did do. I walked downstairs and out of the hotel, and so down to the beach, and found myself half an hour afterward, poking my stick into the sand, making little round holes for the water to fill up, without knowing what I was doing. To this day, I never knew why I went there. When I returned to the hotel, it was dinner-time. I passed through the long passage. The door was shut, but there was the trunk; it was marked "A. D."

What could "A. D." stand for? A Darling, a Dear, a Duck? It certainly was pleasant to have something to be curious about; somebody to think of beside one's self. I reflected as I stood at the glass in the desperate attempt to torture my hair after the fashion of young Wobbles, whose hirsute *ensemble* was at once the envy and ridicule of our artless sex — who, among all their faults, are not amenable to vanity. Oh, no! And when the gong sent its swelling reverberations along the passage, I slammed the door on my old skeleton and strode away to dinner.

I sat nearly opposite to her. I caught her eyes as I sat down, and upset my glass. Consequently I did n't dare to look at her during the meal but twice; once at soup, and once at coffee. I thought she looked conscious and embarrassed. She might if she had known that I seasoned my *food immediately* afterward to such an extent that the first

mouthful produced poignant anguish and tears. But I crucified my flesh for her dear sake. I wonder does she think of it now?

The next day, I obtained the coöperation of young Wobbles, who knew everybody, and was introduced to her on the piazza, at sunset. I had my little weaknesses then — and read Byron, Moore, and Bulwer's early works, and had some slight acquaintance with Alfred Tennyson. I called her attention to celestial appearances, keeping my glance fixed on her large, hazel eyes. There was a wistful yearning expression in them, as if she was looking for somebody or something, or trying to clothe the person she addressed with some familiar habit. I entered into verbal discourse, still looking in her eyes, and carrying on a conversation in their supereloquent language — somewhat after this style: —

"What a magnificent sky." (What beautiful eyes you have.)

"Lovely." (Do you really think so?)

"That rosy flush is unapproachable." (So are your cheeks.)

"Is n't it!" (You make me blush.)

"May I offer you my arm?" (She is lovely.)

"Thank you; it is *so* pleasant." (He is nice.)

We turn and pass the other promenaders one by one, and make our way toward the beach. We look out on the flashing sea. She speaks: —

"I like the sea. It is about the only genuine thing here, although it resembles our little world in yonder caravansary. The waves come rolling in and dash themselves upon the sand, leaving a faint trace, as we do, year after year, only to be obliterated by those that follow."

"Yes," I say, with deep sarcasm, "and those great ones, that rush in periodically, are the 'heavy swells,' and these" — I pick *up a water*-worn pebble — "are the hea[redacted] *are left behind.*"

(Do I suppose that you imagine this conversation genuine? Of course not. You know it 's only a clever way we romancists have of ringing-in a pet idea by putting it in the mouth of irresponsible parties. Did you ever hear girls talk as they do in books? What would conversation be if carried on in that correct, bloodless way? Where would be the anxious interrogating eye, the eloquent gesture, even the dear little misplaced adjectives and bad punctuation which make their disjointed chat, and their "ands," the soul of prattle and gossip?)

We were out about an hour that evening, and it was with great difficulty that I choked back a premature avowal of love, fidelity, etc., etc. I was remarkably eloquent and brilliant — at least, I thought I saw that much reflected in her eyes. It would be pleasant, I thought, to ramble that way, for a lifetime; oblivious of bread and butter and small children, in a country where the sun was perpetually setting and never getting up upon a world of labor and reality, and I grew quite silent, and was beginning to think of my old skeleton, when I looked up and saw her looking at me. It was an expression of distrust and disappointment, that sent an odd fear flashing over me. "It is getting chill," said she, "let us go back." I thought the air had changed marvelously, for I felt cold, too.

The next morning when I saw her, I fancied that she blushed as our eyes met. I thought, too, that her aunt eyed me sharply over her spectacles for a moment. But that day I sedulously cultivated the old lady, and interested myself in her in my old-fashioned, ladylike way, so different from last evening, that we were in a very gossipy conversation in the parlor when A. D. entered from the morning bath. She looked astonished, as well she might; she looked lovely, she could n't help that either. Aunt Viney requested me to repeat that amusing little anecdote about *Mrs. M. M.*, and added: "My dear, this gentleman knows

all about those stuck-up Pigswells, and says their father was only a carpenter. You know what I told you about such people. Put a beggar on horseback" — and the dear old thing absolutely rolled the sweet morsel under her tongue as she left the room. I thought another shade was coming over A. D. 's face, but I mounted my hippogriff, and taking her up behind me, soon soared out of the atmosphere of the thousand and one dinners, into the realms of poetry and fancy.

And so days passed; but why should I repeat any of those variations of the old duet of Love and Youth? From undisguised pleasure at meeting each other, we at last merged into that hopeless stage when every moment out of each other's society was a blank of years; when chance meetings and even slight formalities seemed to have a guilty consciousness. And yet I never spoke of love. I knew that she was rich and an orphan, and that she was talked of as the heiress of her aunt, whom, Wobbles told me, adored her next to the thousands which rumor said she would leave her when she died. I never thought of marriage. I was content with the blissful and artificial present. And I dreaded the old lady's resentment had she imagined my thought. So I regularly humored her, and she, recognizing my easy, meretricious qualities, was civil and social.

I had been thinking of this in conjunction with the old skeleton I carried up there, and had taken my seat upon the piazza as I did once before, when the afternoon stage drew up at the door. There was a figure that lightly leaped down and tripped up the steps, as somebody did I told you of. But what a resemblance in figure, in height, in looks, in action, to — to — to — *myself!* There was the outline of my thin, colorless face, but rounder, and lit with the flush of youth and vigor. The listless, lounging way I had acquired, and I must confess, cultivated, in the stranger was changed to the active buoyancy of youth and energy. A fellow to do, and dare; to live in earnest — I thought as

I looked at him in undisguised admiration. Why didn't the thought that months afterward slowly shaped itself in my brain, and at last sprang forth like the Athenian Pallas, full grown and armed against me, — oh, why didn't it strike me then? Why didn't I know, blind fool that I was, that this was the companion of my bygone life; the child, the boy, the man — my otherself? Why? — well, because it would have spoiled my story, you see!

I called young Wobbles's attention to him, and I think Wobbles objected to him as being too "intense." But I think no one but myself noticed the strange resemblance that he bore to me. When I went upstairs he was standing on the piazza, where *we* stood, you remember, his quick eye turned toward the sea, and his fresh, sun-burned face a little thrown back, his lips partly open, chest dilated, and shoulders squared as if recognizing a familiar presence in the rushing breath of the mighty sea. What was the cause of that miserable sinking of the heart that came over me then? Why did I get myself up, for the regular "feed" that afternoon, listlessly and carelessly? Looking in the glass I saw the grinning head of that old skeleton peeping over my shoulder.

A. D. looked beautiful that day at dinner. In the fullness of her young life, and the unconscious eloquence of her girlish nature, she gave me a look that made my pulse jump and the bones of the old skeleton upstairs rattle. I was yet watching her face, when I noticed the color drop out of her cheek and her eyes assume a fixed and concentrated look, and something swell and rise in her fair young throat. I looked around and saw — my otherself. He had sat down near me, and was looking and evidently admiring her. I saw her eyes turn from his face to mine with that curious, wistful look I had before noticed. Then they sank in maidenly confusion on her plate and she became absorbed in abstr[redacted]tle, like that young woma-

in the Arabian Nights, who did n't like to spoil her appetite for dead bodies, and thought of my skeleton. My otherself had a vulgar, healthy appetite. You think that I have got jealous of the stranger who fancied my girl, — oh, astute reader? Not a bit of it. Jealousy is too active a passion for my temperament. But that night, as I gloomily walked on the beach, I think that if Wobbles had rushed up to me and told me that *somebody* had been carried out in the undertow, I should have composed a handsome obituary or elegiac verses on that *somebody* for the country paper, or done something almost as heartless and gentlemanly.

To show that I had no ill will — I found out from Wobbles that my otherself's name was Reginald de Courcy Altamont, and solicited and obtained an introduction, and overpowered him with civility. I even procured him an introduction to my A. D., whom he frankly confessed he admired. Would you believe that that same ridiculous scene on the piazza was repeated, only by a different and much more natural performer, who took the part of the lover, *vice* myself. I don't know that it did, but I preferred to think so; and have reasons to believe it now. But let me, as I draw nearer the climax, give you an episode.

It was a warm morning. People drooped about in white linen and Marseilles. The sands had a dreadful, unwinking glare, and the sea beyond was quite calm and glittered like green glass. There was no rustle of the tasselated corn, filing away inland to the distant hills; it bent lower in the yellow heat. The trees were dusty and parched. There was one quiet, cool nook that I remembered; thither I bent my steps. I entered the principal passage and followed it until it ended near the eastern gable and was crossed by a reëntering angle, flanked by a sash-door opening upon the balcony. There sat A. D. reading. Her little slippered feet were upon an embroidered worsted "cricket," which she *pushed toward me* with a look and a smile. I sat down

at her feet and took up the book which she had laid down carelessly, and opened it. It was selections from Tennyson. Could it be mine? I look at the fly-leaf. In bold characters I behold, "R. de Courcy Altamont." Oh, I see. I look at her — she meets my gaze fearlessly. "Mr. Altamont lent it to me. I believe you have a copy. You said you admired Tennyson — and I thought" — the artful little minx drops her eyes. Oh, the delicious and exquisite uncertainty of that moment! I opened the book carelessly and read aloud: —

"Go not, happy day,
From the shining fields,
Go not, happy day,
Till the maiden yields."

The book drops. She is looking out of the sash-door, toward the distant sea. I wonder whether she is looking for anybody's ship!

"How very warm it is!"

"Very!"

A long pause — I watch a fly buzzing on the piazza and a grim old spider waiting inside of an extempore web which he has just built at the cornice. He knows the fly will come. It's only a question of time. She taps her little foot and turns an emerald ring upside down on her little finger. I break silence, still watching the fly.

"This life is so very artificial. I should like to have an island somewhere in the tropics — say where Paul and Virginia lived — and forget the frivolities of society, and live alone with her whom I should choose to make my life earnest and happy?" You perceive I end this highly original remark with a note of interrogation, although there was literally no question asked — that was my artful tone of voice!

She turns her head and looks down at me.

"*I don't think* [redacted] *of the kind!*"

In real astonishment I ask, "Why?"

"It would be too much trouble, and — don't get angry now — you don't mean what you say. People who have hearts that are so simple and artless, are not always running to desert islands to enjoy their own immaculate purity untainted. I don't know, but I think it is much pleasanter to try and make ourselves happy here and to familiarize, and accept one another from our own standard, than to wish to be much worthier, wiser, or better than they. If I had a h–h–husband" — the word seemed to stick in her dear little throat — "I should want him to believe well of other people, or I hardly think he could always think well of me. I think an earnest, simple believer like — ah, Mr. Altamont! I have been reading *your favorite author*" (the false, fickle thing!) "I do *so* admire Tennyson."

Yes, there stood my otherself, bowing pleasantly to me and seating himself on a camp-stool he had brought with him! You see the whole thing had been evidently arranged! — they had met before.

I bowed and retired — I did n't feel well and thought a walk would do me good. I looked at the cornice as I went out — the poor fly was struggling in the meshes of the web and the spider was sidling down toward him. I smiled in grim sarcasm. But I felt rather cut for all that.

The time of my return to the city was rapidly approaching.. I had received letters from my employers, informing me that they would expect me to return to my duties about the first prox., and that they hoped I was better. I received another from my Aunt Jemima, stating that she heard that my health was improving, and that I looked like *another man.* I knew the dear old lady was too straightforward for sarcasm, but you may guess that my cheeks flushed at the simple sentence. I informed A. D. carelessly of my intention, and of course looked in her face accidentally *as I did so.* She looked at me curiously, as if

she wanted to say something. But I did n't give her a chance.

With the intention of doing the magnanimous, I called at Altamont's room. The young man was pleasant and hearty — but I think I inclined to Wobbler's opinion that he was "intense." He held me by the hand and pressed it warmly, and told me that he had taken a great fancy to me ever since he had first seen me. "There is something about you, old boy," said he, "that reminds me of somebody that I once knew." I inquired if it was the friend of Toodles that he had reference to. "You 're as wicked as ever," said he, "but I like you for all that — what 'll you take?" I took brandy. We resolved to make a night of it. We accordingly made a night of it that lasted till late the next day. He informed me of all his past history, his present, and his plans for the future, and —

I 've been thinking how I should tell it — I want to make the climax effective without making myself ridiculous — but I may as well tell the truth in plain words. Well, — would you believe it, — this chivalrous, earnest, romantic, healthy young man — my otherself, actually asked *me* to assist him in running off with A. D. Told me that she was willing (the deceitful, bold thing!) — that she loved him, that it was a case of love at first sight, and a great deal more nonsense that was perfectly sickening and driveling. (What fools people do make of themselves on such occasions.) I was disgusted and so left him.

Of course I took things philosophically. When I left the —— House, I did n't take a walk around the piazza, nor loiter along the passage near the door of a certain room. I got into the stage and took Tennyson from my pocket and read, —

"Break, break, break,
At the foot of thy crags, O Sea!
But the tender grace of a day that is dead
Will never come back to me."

That was positively all I did in the sentimental way. When I reached the city I met my kind physician: "You have got a little more iron in your blood, my boy [my heart he might have said], and your flesh is firmer [he grasps my hand] — what have you been doing for the last four weeks?"

"I took your advice, Doctor, and 'forgot myself.'"

It was not my only contact with this otherself, although I have endeavored to relate in these pages an episode of my summer life; this otherself has come to me in bleaker autumn days with the dead leaves and sighing winds. I know that my otherself is happy; that he is known and loved and his name "spoken of men" and reverenced. I am looking forward to a time when myself and this otherself shall be one and inseparable. I do not deem it an idiosyncracy; for you, oh, indulgent reader, looking upon these pages with the sympathies of apperception, may have felt one touch of companionship with me. I see and recognize your otherselves — as I did that of a dear young friend I lately lost. I knew but his objective self, seamed, scarred, worried, and furrowed in the battle of life. But bending over his cold white face a year ago, I saw, in the relaxed lineaments and pleasant air, the older face of his otherself looking out to mine, and upward!

"HIS WIFE'S SISTER"[1]

A STORY OF A SACRIFICE

An elegant and philosophical writer says: "Man's life is only a journey from one fond woman's breast to another." It was probably the object of the author to refer particularly to the mother and wife. As the number of stopping-places is not limited, however, I choose to accept the most catholic interpretation. I believe that what the world usually calls "inconstancy" is only the effort of nature to progress toward perfect affinities. If man in his journey of life stops at a good many ports, it stands to reason that he will acquire a much better knowledge of the world, and will eventually "lay up" in the best haven. Let me give you a modified illustration of my idea. I have a friend who has been subjected to a theory of purely physical progression. His first and earliest affection was for Curls. He became acquainted at the age of ten years with a set of twelve, — large ones at that. This capillary attraction, if I may so term it, was not lasting. A Voice, belonging to another and otherwise plain young woman, next occupied the reverberating chambers of his heart. It was not a fine voice, but it was a positive one and his was a negative. Now you see Curls had a negative voice, and of course two negatives had n't any attraction. Hence his deflection. Then a Bust attracted his undivided attention. It was followed by Eyes and Mouth, which by an unusual phenomenon occurred in the same individual; they were both positive and my friend's own eyes and mouth were negatives. Hence his new variation. He came very near [redacted] providentially saved

by the interposition of an Ankle. He flirted with the Ankle for some time, but an ankle not being a regular feature, of course it was n't lasting. Need I inform the reader that had he met the positive and negative peculiarities combined in one person, he would have fallen in love at once and recognized his affinity? That 's what he was looking for. Hence his hesitation, and what the world foolishly calls his — "inconstancy."

I merely instance this "physical" illustration as being the most forcible and common. Mental and moral peculiarities are met in the same way and are much more difficult to combine. Of course there are some exceptions to the above theory. Indistinctive people are an exception. You may take a stick of wood and saw it into a number of small pieces and you shall find no difficulty in fitting any of the pieces together. But take another stick and break it several times, and you must find the particular adjunct if you wish to join two in one. Now indistinctive people are the sawn blocks: they come naturally together. The broken pieces are men and women of strongly marked opposite characters, with negative and positive dispositions, fitting each other and showing that in the normal state they were one distinct creation. Not unfrequently there is some unnatural matching. A worthy friend of mine, with a smooth, indistinctive surface, married one of the broken pieces; the consequence was obvious; attrition has worn off her salient features and she has become like him. But when two broken surfaces meet, that don't fit — there 's trouble and business for the lawyers at once.

I would like to give you an illustration of another exception, just for its moral. Every story should have a moral or develop some peculiar idea, — but how often do we accept the moral. When our surgical friend strips the walls of this once living temple, and lays bare its wonderful *internal structure,* however irreverent the act, we par[redacted]

for the good that shall accrue to man thereby. But when the novelist with his little scalpel cuts into the character of his opposite neighbor, or his dear friend, and exhibits their internal organism, or shows up his own idiosyncracies, we never recognize ourselves therein. That's quite another affair, of course.

When my friend Dick was about thirty years of age, he had amassed a little fortune. He had flirted a good deal in his time, and was rather a wild young fellow. But under his superficial qualities and manly exterior, there was a large, honest, boy's heart. Whether it had ever been trampled upon, or had the impression of some woman's small foot sunk in it, is of little consequence. But I do not think his heart was that kind of primitive formation, that holds the relics of bygone days in its cold fossiliferous stratum. If Dick had ever had an "affair de cœur," he had forgotten it. He was what we term *blasé*; we — who know nothing about it. Dick did not object to the epithet — he rather liked it, as we all do — and I think he cultivated an ennuied air. If he had had any previous erotic experience, it was in the progressive stages I told you of.

At his boarding-house he chanced occasionally to meet a young girl who seemed to possess many of the attributes he had admired consecutively in others. She was simple and unsophisticated, and supported herself by giving music lessons. With his wholesale admiration of the sex, Dick became interested in her after a fashion. She did not object to his attentions — Miss Mary was flattered and pleased with Dick. And Dick did not exactly love her, for he had doubted the existence of the passion. But he felt it was time to get married. He was getting old. Here was a good chance for him to test his skeptical theory in regard to love. If he really believed there was no such thing, he might as well marry, [illegible]. She would undoubtedly make him [illegible] that was the strong

lever that stirred the romantic foundation of Dick's heart. He could give her a position. She must love him — he could give her happiness! He could, in short, make a — a — yes, that was it, a — *sacrifice*.'

They were married quietly. There were some friends of Dick's present, but the bride was an orphan, and her only relative, a younger sister, lived in a distant State. He took her to a rich and luxurious home. He felt that he had done the correct and gentlemanly thing in every respect, and when he led her into the softly carpeted parlor of their fashionable bower, it was with a feeling of placid self-congratulation. The foolish, simple bride threw her arms about her husband's neck, and said to him,—

"Oh, Dick! how can I thank you?"

Dick was touched and felt an imaginary halo suspend itself over his Olympian brow!

There were no transports with Dick. The honeymoon passed quietly and evenly. He had not expected to be extravagantly blissful — his dream, if one had ever fashioned and shaped his inner man — was deceitful and he knew it. His wife was all to him that he had sought, it seemed — but yet the possession of her love did not seem fraught with the strange fascination that he had often conceived in his early days. There was something wanting. He would never let her know it; oh, no, it would spoil his perfect sacrifice. But perhaps it was this consciousness that placed a deeper chasm betwixt his wife's affections and his own. He felt he had another's happiness in his keeping and he resolved to guard it as preciously as his own. This state of affairs, as you may readily imagine, though very romantic, put him upon a forced and unnatural behavior, which added another million of miles to that awful chasm. And Dick sometimes found himself sitting opposite to her, in their comfortable parlor, and wondering if that strange woman was *his wife*. There was the contour of the face [redacted]

haunted his boyish visions; there was the same soft voice and winning accent — and yet why was n't he happier? why was n't he grateful? what was the meaning of that awful barrier that lay between them? Why was he doing the Spartan business, and all that sort of thing? He would get up at such times and go over to the neat womanly figure, and gaze into her eyes and kiss her red lips and say, "Are you happy, my dear?" and then she would look back an answer, and would say, "Are you not, Dick?" Dick would say emphatically, "Certainly, my dear!" with a great deal of unnecessary decision.

A time came when Dick's wife was not able to visit much, and kept her room a great deal; and Dick learned that this young sister of hers would visit her, and that for certain reasons, the visit would be very opportune; and it was with that strange flutter which the consciousness of a coming event occasions in the breast of the expectant parent, that Dick was sitting by himself in the little library, before the fire. Her chair — for she was wont to bring her work in and sit with her husband while he read — was standing opposite and her work-basket was still upon the table. He was trying to analyze the strange sensations that were thronging upon him, and looking forward to a happier state of being, when it occurred to him that he might assist his reflections by smoking. He drew out his cigar-case, bit off the end of a fragrant Havana, and looked around for a bit of paper to light it. His eye fell on his wife's basket. There was a white paper sticking out of a chaotic scramble of various colored fragments. He took it up. It seemed to be a letter. He was about replacing it when his eye caught a passage containing his own name.

I have told you that Dick was the soul of honor. If he had known that his wife did n't [illegible] to read that letter, *he would* n't have read it. If [illegible] gined for a moment *that it contained* anything [illegible]

of his wife's, he would have sat and blinked at it all day, or perhaps have walked upstairs with it and handed it to her, saying, "My dear, you have left a letter below. I don't know what it is, or who it's from," and would have departed dramatically. But not knowing what it was, you see, he coolly read on, commencing at the paragraph containing his name, as I do: —

"I am sorry to hear that Dick is not all that you fondly imagined. Don't ask *me*, dear, for advice; it is better you should leave all to *time* and your own *tact and judgment*. I think that no one is capable of mediating between a wife's affections and her husband's — *even a sister*. I would say that you ought to have weighed all this before you bound yourself to one whom you think is not worthy of your affections; but we cannot recall what is past. No! *indeed*. You say that your Dick has a generous heart, and in this world, dear! you know that this ought to make up for other defects, even if he be *dull* and *stupid!* [Oh! you should have seen Dick's face at this moment!] Your sacrifice, I know, was a *great* one, but men cannot appreciate the sacrifices we make. No, *never!* But I will soon be with you, my dearest sister, and perhaps I may be able to do something for you, with this queer being whom you have taken for a husband. Don't think I am hardhearted or unsisterly either if I can't understand your feelings. I never saw the man yet that I could whimper over or feel bad about. 'Good-bye,' dear, till I see you, which will be soon!

"Your affectionate sister,

"'Tie.'"

"Dull and stupid!" He "dull and stupid!" — he, Dick — the delight of select circles! — the witty, fascinating, agreeable, gossipy Dick! "Dull and stupid!" and her *sacrifice* — her "*great* sacrifice"! Wh[illegible]

When? How? Where? And this was the return — this was the result of his noble, Roman-like conduct; this was eventuating from his deeply delicate, poetical, gentlemanlike treatment. This was her opinion of him — the opinion of the wife of his bosom, the partner of his joys, the sharer of his wealth, his property — the woman he — no! not *loved!* "Dull and stupid!" Why, the woman was a fool; they were both fools! they were hypocrites! they were ingrates! they were — women!

He sank back in his chair. Then he started up and threw the letter in the grate, and carefully replaced his cigar in the basket. Then he burnt his fingers recovering the letter. Then he put his hands upon his head, his elbows upon his knees, and in that position reflected.

He thought he had better not say anything about it. He was in for a sacrifice and the bigger the better. "Ho, there! Bring in some fagots and lay 'em round the stake! Pour on the oil and wine and give the brands another poke! Here's the spectacle of a Christian young husband immolated on the hymeneal altar. Hurrah! Fetch on your fagots!"

"Dull and stupid!" He liked that! Well, he'd let them see his dullness and stupidity, hereafter, with a vengeance. And that young sister, indeed! A snub-nosed, freckled faced, hoydenish thing, with braids and mincing ways, and — daring to talk about him — Dick! — the man of the world! the *blasé* man, — as dull and stupid! Well, he'd like to have his friend Wobbles hear that; how he'd laugh! At them? Of course. Certainly at them. But then he'd better not say anything about it — on his wife's account.

When he went upstairs to his wife's chamber he made some light, trifling, jocular remark which I regret has not reached me, but which had the effect of making his Mary open her eyes in meek astonishment. "Dull and stupid," thought Dick; "indeed!"

There was some little preparation a week afterward; and one day Dick, coming home, saw some boxes in the hall and several mysterious-looking bundles lying about, and other signs which seemed to indicate that his wife's sister had arrived. Of course, the recollection of that letter did not tend to awaken lively anticipations of a meeting with the disagreeable "Tip." He thought at first that he would try the dignified and stately, and otherwise impress the young woman with a sense of her previous irreverence. But then he wished to establish a character the opposite of those adjectives which yet swam before his eyes. "Dull and stupid" and "dignified and stately" seemed only a hopeless alliteration. He had sent the servant upstairs to inform his Mary of his coming, by way of preparing the repentant and humbled "Tip" for his awful retributive presence. Then he changed his mind and thought of rushing upstairs boisterously. He made a step toward the library door when it was thrown open; two white arms were flung about his neck, two big blue eyes looked into his, while a pair of scarlet lips articulated in rapid accents: "My dear! dear brother!"

Dick was taken aback. He looked down at the beautiful and girlish figure and felt — he, the "*blasé*" man — awkward and embarrassed. His lips syllabled a few commonplaces, but the breath of life seemed to have left him. He could only lead her to a sofa and stand and gaze at her. She was certainly very pretty — so like his wife, and yet so unlike.

"Oh, dear! I did *so* long to see you. Why didn't you come upstairs? I was afraid you were angry at something. You are not at all like Mary's husband. I know I shall like you. You're my brother, you know, and I never had a brother; and I'm sure I shall love you so much. You don't say anything! Why, what's the matter? Why, you look pale! You're sick! Mary! Good gracious!"

Poor Dick! Poor, poor Dick! It was over. He was

better now. Yes, he was calm, too — he saw it all. She was sitting before him, on the very seat his wife had occupied; the same contour of features; the same outline, the same figure — but oh! that indefinable expression and this strange feeling and thrilling. The vision of his past life, the dreams of his youth were looking out of the anxious pretty glance that met his own. Oh, rash, hasty, inconsiderate fool! He had stopped one step short of perfect affinity. This was his wife's sister! wife's sister? Oh Heavens, he had married *his wife's* sister! This was his wife! The sacrifice was complete.

No, not complete! It remained for him to smother the fires of his new passion in the dead ashes of his past life. It was at once his torture and his crown to minister to the invalid wants of the real wife of his manhood, in company with the fair young ideal wife of his youth. It was his great glory to feel the touch of her warm, soft hand on his brow, when he sometimes sat alone distractedly, groping blindly in the darkness for some clue to lead him away from the pitfalls that beset his path. He could not help seeing that he had awakened a sympathetic interest in "Tip's" young heart — a feeling as yet undefined and holy in its nameless orphan purity. But the sacrifice was not complete.

They were sitting alone in the little library, and she sat opposite to him in his wife's chair. He raised his eyes and she drew her chair nearer to him, and in her simple, artless way asked his forgiveness!

"For what, Tip?"

"Well, never mind; say you'll forgive me. I once thought worse of you than you deserved and I may have said something to Mary; did she tell you anything?"

Dick could conscientiously wave a negative.

"I've changed my mind since, brother! You're so *different. I'm sure* I know of no one who could make

Mary happier than you. I judge so by what I have seen of you and by my own feelings, for you know, Mary and I are all that are left of our family. Do you think we are alike? I think that I shall never marry, for I could not find another like Mary's husband."

. The artless simplicity and genuine sincerity of poor Tip extorted a groan from Dick.

Instantly she was at his side. "Don't worry, brother, about Mary, she will be better soon. I know how you feel, dear, and it must be a comfort to Mary to know your sympathy."

How shall I end my story, reader? Shall I say that Tip was again wrong; that Mary did not get better? That she lingered for a while and, striving to bring a feeble, immortal soul into this earthly light, laid down her own dear woman's life, a willing sacrifice upon the altar? Shall I say that Tip and Dick stood by holding her hands, when the first cry of the struggling immortal heralded her way to the home it just had quitted? How that the poor motherless child found a guardian angel in Tip?

How else can I marry Dick to his wife's sister?

A CASE OF BLASTED AFFECTIONS[1]

I NEVER had any astonishing adventure in an omnibus. I never had the privilege of paying the fare of any beautiful young lady who had lost her *porte-monnaie*. I never protected any lady passenger from the advances of a Fiend in Human Shape. I never got out to give my seat to a fair unknown, who thanked me with a deep blush, and handed me her card — being the only daughter of a stern but well-known citizen with a palatial residence at South Park, etc., etc. On the contrary, I have held frantic children and taken care of dyspeptic lap-dogs. I have been entrusted with bundles which became vitalized in my hands, and would undo themselves, and cover me with hooks and eyes, and spools of cotton. I have gone down from the light of day under a cloud of crinoline on either side. I am the unfortunate "gentleman" who always makes "room for a lady," and have been poked with a parasol for my pains. I can't see that putting people like pills in a box and shaking them tends to make them social — but like the pills they are apt as perfect spheres to round off from each other whenever they come in contact.

Yet, because an apple never dropped on my head I have no reason to doubt the theory of gravitation; and I have no cause to be skeptical regarding my young friend Puffer's blasted affections, just because I never was elected to romance and adventure.

. . . . . .

It was a bright May day in San Francisco, and spring bonnets were just coming out, when Alexis Puffer hailed a

[1] *Golden Era*, October 21, 1860.

South Park and North Beach omnibus on the corner of Stockton and Pacific Streets. He was attired in the height of the prevailing fashion and his boots were glossy as the raven's wing. (You may have met that idea of the "raven's wing" as applied to the hair of the human head. I only claim the merit of Boucicaulting it in another situation.) Entering the stage, with that graceful listlessness which betokens the perfect gentleman, but exasperates the waiting passengers and drives the driver nearly to the verge of madness, he seated himself by the door, and applying the ivory leg with which the top of his cane was appropriately ornamented, he sucked it thoughtfully for five minutes. Not deriving the comfort therefrom which might be expected, he turned his eyes for the first time on his fellow-passengers. The people who were looking at him immediately looked out of the door and windows with that affected carelessness which is always fatal. Only one sat unmoved. It was a young girl on the opposite side, close to the driver's box, with her veil partially covering her face, but with one eye unmasked in the Turkish fashion and still gazing intently at him. She was very pretty — not perhaps a Greek outline, you know, for since the days of Phidias, energy and books have wrought over the old model. The brow has been lifted, the curve of the upper lip shortened, and action has taken the place of repose. Electric telegraphs and steam engines have opened Juno's half-shut eyes. The glance that was turned on poor Puffer was thrilling, and bright and pitiless. It was the eye of the beauty of A.D. 1860!

Puffer was not a man to be abashed by a pretty woman's glance, but he felt not altogether, exactly comfortable. He looked back at her admiringly and she met his eyes with unflinching coolness. He smiled affably. Her pretty lip scarcely quivered, but she did not avert her gaze. Suddenly *Mr. Alexis Puffer felt* a strange moisture come

eyes and he was fain to turn feebly to the window. Recovering himself, he looked back at her again. The big blue eye met his as before, and he fancied a gleam of pitiless triumph. But the water coming into his own again made him drop his lids and take out his handkerchief, in a weak, foolish way. The contest was unequal, and Puffer wilted.

As the omnibus jolted along, Puffer became aware of three things. First: That he was in love with the fair unknown. Second: That she must be his wife. Third: It would n't do to have a wife that one could n't ogle. He again slowly turned his head toward the mysterious female, but with the same result; she had not apparently once averted her gaze since he had entered. One by one the passengers were dropped along the route, but Puffer resolved to stay until she had departed or until they were left alone together. There was no doubt in his mind that this strange glance was the result of an unconscious soul seeking its affinity. A few moments would explain all. At last the portly stranger opposite got out and they were alone.

Puffer had resolved upon some trivial remark by the way of opening conversation, and on looking up was relieved to see that the clear eye of the fair unknown was turned to the opposite window. He was about to speak, but at this moment the following singular circumstance intervened.

To it, Puffer frequently avers, he owes his eternal happiness.

A mosquito was buzzing in the vicinity of the lovely young woman. Once or twice she raised a neatly gloved hand to keep off the rash intruder who seemed bent upon feasting upon that round, rosy cheek. The winged guerilla, however, yet hovered about and approached the unconscious young female who was still absorbed in pensive contemplation of the opposite window. It neared her brow; and again retired; it again approached, and oh gracious! it lit upon the

open pupil of the big blue eye. It was feasting there upon her eye, and she sat unwinking.

In an instant the impetuous Puffer was at her side and had dashed his fist in her lovely optic. She screamed, and covering her face with her hands murmured piteously, "My eye."

Puffer sank at her feet.

"For God's sake, Miss; it is not injured fatally, I trust! I saw the insect! — perhaps I was rude — nay, rough; but I trust I have saved your eyesight. Forgive me, dearest; forgive me!" said Puffer, with heart-rending accents.

"Brute! monster! you 've knocked my eye out!"

"Loveliest creature, say you jest! How could such a slight touch —"

"Oh, dear! don't talk! but find it — it's here somewhere," and she sank on her knees and fumbled among the straw.

Something was glistening there. Puffer picked it up. It was her eye. *A glass one!*

Puffer sank senseless in the straw. He was removed at the terminus.

"RAN AWAY"[1]

At an early and sensitive age I was subjected to an act of grievous injustice. I have no remembrance of what it was, except a general impression that it must have been of an appalling and irremediable character. Whether remotely connected with the quality of the pudding made by my maternal aunt, or whether a long sustained deficiency of butter and sugar on my daily bread swelled my youthful bosom almost to bursting — I cannot remember. I only know that it was of that crushing, desolate, and irretrievable nature, that even the hopeful imagination of youth, looking into the glowing vista of futurity, saw but one avenue of escape. It was a dreadful and sacrificial alternative. I took it and — *ran away.*

Ran Away! Let me recall the figures which would arise before me at that tender age in conjunction with those awful words. I see a small but thick-set young man, in his shirt-sleeves, rather blurred and indistinct, with a stick on his shoulder with a bag hanging on it, and his leg raised in a singular manner. I know that he is an "Indented Apprentice," and an indented apprentice I feel must be worse than any other kind of apprentice. I connect him with a dreadful bond which I believe to be signed with his blood, making him body and soul the property of his master. He is always running away from the "subscriber." I have got him mixed up with that dreadful "Tom Idle," but he always retains his bundle and stick, and that raised leg is as distinctive a feature of my childish memory as Johnny Horner's thumb. I have often lain awake in my *little crib and pictured* him rushing through the streets in

[1] *Golden Era*, November 4, 1860.

his favorite attitude, pursued by that relentless and cruel "subscriber." I have tracked him in fancy on stormy nights, wandering over cold and desolate fields — facing the beating of the pitiless blast; or stopping in a wayside inn and picking up the newspaper containing that advertisement, and starting off again horror-struck at that dreadful picture of himself which he surely must recognize. I have seen that dreadful phrase applied to horses and dogs. I have stood on the corners of streets, and waited patiently for the coming of that horse sixteen hands high with a star on his forehead and spot on his off foreleg, which I should instantly recognize, and go up to him with a piece of salt in my hand (which in anticipation I always carried in my pocket) and would take him home to that "subscriber," and receive a large amount of gold money which would keep me comfortably in marbles and taffy for the rest of my existence. I have brought home numberless curs of low degree and compared them with the description of the white and liver-colored pointer belonging to another "subscriber." These were the associations with which that strange and fascinating phrase at that age surrounded me, and which I was destined to realize when I ran away.

I gave myself five minutes for preparation. My outfit, I flattered myself, was complete. It consisted of an invaluable Protean knife which professed to do everything that boy could ask — be everything that boy could require — that commenced as a saw and ended as a corkscrew; a roll of twine and a button; two pieces of colored glass; the top of a gold pencil; a peculiar kind of cake — resembling in shape the almanac cuts of the sun — called a Bolivar; two fish-hooks deeply embedded in the lining of my pocket; the round brass runner from the leg of an easy-chair, which I carried, as boys always carry some one particular article, for no earthly object — but with a strong faith *in its utility*. I had two cents accessible. I say

accessible, having once lost a sixpence which I firmly believed to be in the lining of my jacket, and which in cases of emergency I always felt sure I could be able to produce by the aid of my knife. My attire was a gray jacket with the epidemic eruption of button, Scotch plaid trousers, drab gaiters buttoning halfway up my calf, and a straw hat. My physical peculiarities were a large head, round stomach, and short legs. My household appellative — derived from the foregoing description, I imagine — was "Tubbs."

When I crept down the stairs and out of the front door and thence down the steps, there was a choking in my throat and a quivering of the upper lip which only the memory of that Awful Wrong could restrain. I had a faint idea of walking toward the country, where I had no doubt there was field for adventure for all small boys who ran away. This preference was opposed to another in regard to Desert Islands, which I knew to be only accessible by ship. But there was one consideration paramount to all. Freed from restraint and having — I felt — cut society, I resolved to do two things which I had been especially forbidden. I went down on the wharf and with gloomy satisfaction walked on the string-piece of the pier. I never have been able to recollect why I did so, except that I knew my parents would have been frantic if they had known it. Then there was a certain disreputable porter house where I had once been found after school hours, gazing with evident admiration at two greasy, red-faced men playing cards, and keeping count for them on my slate. Having been threatened with punishment if the offense was ever repeated, in my present state of lawlessness and freedom I felt that I ought to go there. But haply for my morals, on entering the sanded room, a red-faced, masculine woman, who was killing flies with a towel, rushed up to me, exclaiming, "Home wid yez," and whisked me out of the house. I was terribly frightened: but more than that, my confidence

and inviolability as a runaway was bruised and shaken. The dreadful words, "Home wid yez," rang in my ears. Home? Did she not recognize in me a bold adventurer who scorned such a thing as home?

Let me recall for the sake of those few grown-up children who may read these pages — turning back to the leaves of their childish memories to compare my experience with theirs — let me recall a few incidents of that eventful occasion. Behold me, when with strong courage and determined purpose, I have penetrated to the great throbbing artery of the mighty city. I have become subdued, hushed, and awe-stricken. Everything looks so large. Though familiar with this broad avenue, never do I find it as long, as interminable, as choked with human life as then. I feel myself lost in the moving crowd — a purposeless, helpless little being, drifting on the downward current. I fancy that people notice my vagueness of purpose, and I take out my handkerchief and tie up the colored glass and the broken runner, and make a point of carrying the bundle thus formed ostentatiously in my hand. Suddenly all the bells ring throughout the city. I think of Bow Bells and Richard Whittington, but my fancy refuses a favorable interpretation. The bell of St. John's is calling out: "Ran-a-way, ran-a-way!" St. Paul's takes up the burden, adding: "Lit-tle-boy, lit-tle-boy"; while Trinity, away up in its smoky elevation, calls out for them to "Send-him-back, send-him-back," until the hand on the dial passes noon, and I sink upon a doorstep in poignant anguish.

I shake out another coil of my memory, and see myself, as the shadows lengthen, staggering along toward the region of green fields — my *ultima Thule*. I have become possessed in some mysterious way of half a watermelon, and a miserable cur with whom I have shared my cake has apparently made up his mind to run away in company with me. But when the cake is gone his attention becomes distracted

by bones and old boots, and at last he openly deserts. I meet a boy two or three years my senior, who promises to become my man Friday, who informs me that his name is "Patsey," and who whistles in a peculiarly shrill and charming manner with his fingers between his teeth. After imparting my plans to him, I make a formal division of my property. I give him my knife, the colored glass, and the runner. He stipulates to erect a suitable stockade dwelling by the aid of the magical knife; and the colored glass he is to give in barter to the Indians which I inform him we shall meet in great numbers in the country. The transfer of these articles, however, seems to excite a singular influence over Patsey. He once or twice sidles up against me, with one side of his body in a very rigid state and the other swaying loosely about. He turns up the sleeves of his jacket suspiciously. Suddenly he stops, and walks me up against the fence, his rigid side toward me, and puts the following denunciatory query: —

"Ain't you a Crosby Streeter?"

I reply that I am not.

"Nor an Ellum Streeter?"

I disavow any knowledge of Elm Street.

"Why, blank your blank blank soul, you blank little blank! Who in blank are you lying to? Blank you!"

In great tribulation at this unexpected change of manner, I proceed to inform him that my last place of residence being Abingdon Square, I must of necessity be an Abingdon Squarer. To my increasing terror, his democratic bosom rebelled at the aristocratic title, causing him to suddenly knock my hat off, square off, and dance backward on one leg in the most appalling manner, shrieking out: —

"Here 's a go — my eye! Oh, you blank stiffy! Blank you, I 'll go with you? Oh, won't I! Hello, Carrots, Swipsey, here 's a stiffy! Blank him! Oh, Blank! Blank!"

In this manner he retreats, vehemently calling upon Car-

rots and Swipsey to annihilate me, and forgetting in his disgust to return my knife, my colored glass, and my runner. A doleful and sickening sense of loneliness comes over me with his defection. I begin to think there are cruelties and wrongs in this world as bad as that Awful Wrong I ran away from.

Another flash along the back track. It is twilight of the long summer day, and having given up the idea of pastoral life I am walking toward the water with the intention of shipping as cabin boy. I wonder if there are any vessels up for the Isle of France. I should like to go to the island where Captain Cook was killed, but I have forgotten the name. I shall find out probably when I get down to the ships. I shall make a three years' voyage, at which time I shall have grown up beyond recognition. I shall come back with a great deal of gold money which I shall carry in little bags marked $20,000, $30,000, etc. I will find Patsey and lick him and send him to sea, and give a large sum of money to the Elm and Crosby Streeters. I shall drive down home in a carriage just as my Uncle Ned did when he came back from Europe, and create a great sensation and have my aunt bring out the pie which she only gives to company. I shall then say, "Behold, your long lost nephew!" or words to that effect and get into my carriage, and immediately drive away, leaving them petrified in astonishment. But I wonder what they will do with my old clothes, and whether they will put anybody in my little bed, and if they will get anybody to repeat "The boy stood on the burning deck" for them, when there is company, as I did. And it was real mean in them to treat me as they did — and behold, I am crying!

I look back again, and lo! I am standing before a great building with glistening lights and people passing into a large hall, and a great bill, in letters as large as myself, announcing the tragedy of "King John"! I am looking

wistfully at the handbill, when a young man with a pleasant face takes me by the shoulder and asks me if I think I 'll honor the house with my distinguished presence. I shrink back bashfully, but am not frightened at the expression of his comely features. He repeats the question, when I tell him that I have no money. He holds out his hand. I look at him, with that quick perception of physiognomy which I believe God gives peculiarly to children and women, and take it, and before I know well where I go I am in a blaze of gaslight and excitement. I "do" the play of "King John" completely as I have never done it since — with a painful conception of that Hubert and the hot irons. I come out with the funny young man, and he offers to see me safe home. I dread to tell him that I have run away, as I think he will only laugh when I talk about that Awful Wrong, and so I tell him I live in Fourteenth Street, resolving to leave him at the corner of Broadway and pursue the even tenor of my way toward the ships and the Isle of France. But I distinctly remember, as we walk along, he points to a large house in one of the cross-streets and tells me incidentally that he "hangs out" there. There is such a strange fascination in the expression that I do not wonder that many years after I had been Found, I always reverently passed that spot and looked up at the windows, not without a vague hope of seeing my quondam friend suspended from the roof and smiling pleasantly at me. But I left him at the corner of the street and never saw him again.

One more reflect and the last. I have given up all idea of going to the Isle of France that night, for sooth to say my head is giddy and aching and I am very weary and sleepy. I doubt very much if I could find the ships. And I have forgotten in the excitement of the play that I had no supper. And I should like to go to bed. I walk along, but I do not find any tree to lie under, and doubt

very much if I did that the robins would come down at that time of night to cover me with leaves. I keep shy of policemen in my memory of the Indented Apprentice, and shrink in the shadow of an area when I see a stranger. But I find suddenly that the houses seem to be getting in my way and the lamp-posts occur *so* frequently. I must be very sleepy. And I think I am a little sick. I know I have a pain. My last act of volition is to crawl up a flight of steps where there is a rug and lie down upon it. I believe that I am dreadfully injured and that the people who drove me to this will never go to the Heaven that I see above me and the stars that twinkle as if they were sleepy, too. I fall asleep. It is only to become Arthur and know that Patsey is putting out my eyes. I am embarked on a watermelon for the Isle of France, but I slip off and am drowning. I am very sick and my head aches. I am an indented apprentice running away from my master. I see them putting bills up on the theatre, and when I go to read them I see "Ran Away" in dreadfully big letters, and the bells suddenly begin to ring and say "Send-him-back." And then, there is the noise of a carriage and a sweet woman's voice, and somebody is saying, "Poor little fellow!" And the sweet woman's voice seems to come from somebody dressed in a ball dress, and there are gentlemen with white kids on their hands and a strong smell of perfume, and then lights, and then somebody is rubbing me and pouring something down my throat and washing my face. And then I go to sleep for several weeks, as it seems, and somebody rushes up to me and kisses me frantically and cries and sobs, which surely cannot be my aunt, and I am taken away in a carriage, and I am a hero and the envy of my brother who used to bully me, and allowed to do as I please, everybody believing that if thwarted in any way I will surely revenge myself again, and — Run Away.

MADAME BRIMBORION[1]

MADAME BRIMBORION left New York quite suddenly. She made up her mind one morning while making up her long black hair at the glass in her neat little back bedroom. She did n't tell her bosom friends and relations — for she had n't any. But she made some few business arrangements, and that day week put up the shutters in front of the three straw bonnets that hung in the bow window of her shop. Before the neighbors had fairly commenced wondering what had become of the pretty French Milliner, the pretty French Milliner had embarked on a long journey.

It was said that some susceptible masculine hearts were crushed by this singular freak of Madame's. I don't think it was Madame's fault, for although prompt of tongue, and ever ready with the flash of black eyes and white teeth, she had given no encouragement. A majority of her sex found fault with her for being "forward" — of course, altogether from her desire, and not her ability, to please. The exhibition of these genial fascinations had the usual effect upon the stronger and wiser of my species. Young men winked at each other when Madame Brimborion's name was mentioned. Indeed, one or two of the most sagacious, who had taken large and liberal views of society from the shilling side of Broadway, and indulged in like exhausting dissipations, felt called upon to express their opinions that she had gone off with some "buck" or other, just as they expected.

But even the knowledge of the world gathered under such favorable auspices was in this instance incorrect. The black-eyed gazelle, Madame B., was accompanied by no

[1] *Golden Era*, February 3, 1861.

male of her kind. She made the long journey alone. Female companionship she had none, except that afforded her by two of my fair countrywomen who shared her stateroom. The association was unharmonious. Madame B. committed grave faults. She preferred the deck to her stateroom, masculine to feminine society, and was unfailing in cheerfulness and vivacity. If Madame was seasick she kept it to herself. Such dissimulation and deceit, of course, met with the proper degree of coldness and contempt from the rest of her sex.

The long journey had the usual effect upon this floating microcosm of character. There was the common experience of little vulgarities and petty selfishness. Gentle hearts boiled over with rage against each other, and even peaceful doves learned to peck. But Madame B. floated quite calmly on the top of this seething, boiling cauldron. The lady passengers conferred with each other. A jury retired, and the verdict rendered was short but decisive. Impropriety in the first degree. Sentence — transportation to Coventry.

Meanwhile the steamer rolled and plunged — until a low latitude was reached and the green flash of a tropical sea. When the heat grew intense and the smell of oil and bedding and victuals seemed more oppressive, a fatal epidemic broke out among the steerage passengers, and occasionally a body was committed to the deep.

If Madame B.'s popularity with the sterner sex had been waning, it would have been suddenly revived by her conduct on the present occasion. She moved like an angel of mercy among the sick. In the foul gloom and dampness of a crowded steerage, she stood by the little ready-made biers whereon the men stretched themselves out to die, in the midst of corruption. It was the flash of Madame's eyes and teeth that lit up this pestiferous gloom — it was the soft touch of Madame's fingers that seemed to have gone over the old wrinkles and lines of trouble and passion in

the dying face, and to have brought out the underlying of a better self.

It was a pleasant moonlight night and the passengers were lazily grouped about the steamer's deck. The regular beat of paddles broke the monotonous silence with quite as monotonous an expression. The ship's bell had just struck, when a terrible scream thrilled the crowded ship from stem to stern. For a moment after, the noise of the paddles seemed hushed. Then there was a confused murmur of the passengers and a rushing to and fro. Presently all was explained. Madame Brimborion had tripped in the darkness of the lower deck and had almost fallen through the hatchway. But to all the gallant inquiries of the gentlemen, Madame replied that she was very foolish and frightened, and that she was better — with the old promptness of smile and glance. But the ladies thought that Madame looked pale. And the ladies were right.

There was another burial next day; a foreigner with a queer name — a steerage passenger. His effects were taken charge of by the purser of the ship, who was a quiet young man with a good deal of experience in his duties. In one of his listless walks that day about the deck, he stopped in front of Madame's stateroom. Madame was quite languid, but pleasant as ever. Purser was glad to see that Madame looked so well, and had something to give her. He drew a small, old-fashioned ivory miniature from his pocket and handed it to Madame. It was the likeness of a young woman with bright black eyes and an expressive mouth. "I took it from his neck myself, Madame, and I think none else saw it," was the only explanation of this discreet young officer, as he departed.

Madame Brimborion's name has long been changed. She married very well, I have heard, and makes an exemplary ornament to society, with her strong social qualities.

THE LOST HEIRESS [1]

A TALE OF THE OAKLAND BAR

One of Bret Harte's early burlesques, a forerunner of his "Condensed Novels." J. Keyser, whose inimitable limnings of high-life form the standing topic of conversation in the polished circles of metropolitan society, asserts another claim to the admiration of the lovers of refined family literature, by his remarkably elegant tale of "The Lost Heiress." — Press Notice from the *Golden Era*.

NOT a hundred miles from the luxurious and glittering metropolis of this State breaks upon the enraptured view the fair city of Oakland. Its inhabitants are chiefly composed of pure and exalted beings whom it is a pleasure to visit and an honor to know. They are generally affluent and genteel.

It has majestic groves and massy parks and costly country-seats. Property is, indeed, valuable in Oakland. One of the largest country-seats I have ever beheld is in the centre of Oakland.* It is, indeed, an elegant place of luxury and leisure and respectable refinement.

Wearied by the duties of fashionable life and nearly consumed by *ennui*, one magnificent Sunday morning I visited there. I proceeded instantly to the residence of one of the first families, and was treated to a sumptuous entertainment. The table was furnished with all that the market could afford, and I was privately informed by my generous host that the wine of which I partook was worth $5 a bottle. I merely quote this circumstance to give an instance of the real nature of genteel and aristocratic society with which I am familiar.

* The talented author has committed an error — the building alluded to was the Agricultural Pavilion.

[1] *Golden Era*, February 24, 1861.

After dinner a gilded *coupé* was brought to the house, and when my host and I were seated therein, we drove through the magnificent suburbs. As we passed a large mansion he pointed to it silently, and suddenly burst into tears. "Why this sudden emotion?" I inquired, with sympathetic condolence, proffering at the same moment my embroidered *mouchoir*. "Leave me," he only said in a choking voice. I immediately got out and left him, assuming the character of a pedestrian.

Two weeks after, when he had sufficiently recovered he told me the following affecting story. Respect to his affluent circumstances and our mutual intimacy is a sufficient reason why I should retain his own beautiful language: —

. . . . . .

"Some years ago in yonder stately mansion dwelt an angelic being. She had *all* the accomplishments, and performed with equal ease upon the piano and accordeon. Accustomed from her earliest infancy to gymnastics, in the Indian Club and Parallel Bar exercise she stood unrivaled. Sent to a fashionable boarding-school at a tender age, she received a diploma for 'manners.' It became evident to her doting parents that she was too pure for this world — an earthly exotic, transplanted into one of the fairest gardens in Oakland. Such was the gentle Sophonisba. It was on one of the floating palaces which ply between San Francisco and this elegant suburb, that Sophonisba first met Algeron Montfalcon. He was in the disguise of a lowly deck hand, occasionally alternating his duties with that of a fireman.

"One of those sudden reverses of fortune peculiar to California, resulting chiefly from the young-gentlemanly habits of gaming, had reduced him to this lonely position of tending fires. If we may be permitted to enliven our painful narrative by a play of vivid fancy, we would say that the

transition from 'poker' to the furnace was natural. But we refrain from mirth. Enough that he was hurled from his high estate.

"Their meeting was singularly romantic. On one occasion he handed her on board the boat and she was struck with his intense and noble bearing. In the bashful timidity of blushing maidenhood she forgot that she had left a magnificent reticule upon the wharf. The boat had already proceeded twenty feet. Fired by her distress the noble Algeron instantly sprang overboard, regained the treasure, and laid it dripping at her feet. The passengers who witnessed this self-sacrificing act instantly burst into tears. 'Unexceptional creature!' cried Algeron, kneeling distractedly at her feet, 'behold me here without an introduction. Etiquette was made for slaves!' 'You do me proud, fair youth,' said Sophonisba with an effort recalling her 'manners,' then relapsing into gushing girlish playfulness, she struck him over the head with her parasol. This characteristic act proved that from thence their hearts were one. Such is inconsistent girlhood.

"They kept company for some time. But the strange guardian of the peerless young girl was adamantine. Conscious of the immense wealth in which he daily rolled, could it be expected he could look upon the gay and bold yet honest Algeron with sentiments of affection and esteem? No! Society forbids it. Tearing her from the soft seclusion of Oakland, he announced his intention to proceed with her forthwith to San Francisco. Plunged in the giddy whirl of fashion and aristocracy she would forget the past. Rash thought! Could she even in the delights of a Fireman's Ball, the refined melodrama of Maguire's or the epicurean sensations of Peter Job's forget the past? Ah, no!

. . . . . .

"They embarked on the last boat for San Francisco. The night was appropriately dark and the heavens seemed to frown

on the rash father. The fog came in heavily. A group of anxious passengers gathered around the captain, but the bold and fearless man — recognizing only the stern calls of duty — pushed boldly forth in the stream, himself guiding the helm. He would make San Francisco or perish in the attempt. A sentiment of awe and admiration thrilled the passengers. The gentlemanly clerk was cool. The barkeeper remained at his post. Such was the influence of discipline.

"The boat neared the channel. She struck on the Bar!

"There was the wildest excitement; many of the passengers rushed frantically to the barkeeper, and ordered mixed drinks and fancy liquors in the unendurable agony of the moment. The young barkeeper, for an instant placed in the most responsible position, never shrank from his duty. But two counterfeit halves were taken in that unguarded rush.

"On the dock were two figures clasped in each other's arms — Algeron and Sophonisba. His face was turned toward the distant lights of San Francisco. He quoted Byron with ease and elegance, as the storm rose about them. She sang in low tones the maddening and popular air, 'Ever of Thee!' Suddenly the fog obscured them from view.

"The affluent father of the peerless Sophonisba had been one of the first to participate in the rush to the bar. The excitement passed, he thought of his daughter. Well mayest thou think of her now — purse-proud aristocrat! He rushed through the magnificent ladies' saloon. She was not there.

"In frantic agony he again rushed on deck. What did his eyes behold — and what riveted the gaze of the awe-stricken passengers generally!

"A boat was drifting out in the bay. In the stern sheets were two figures — Algeron, holding the American Flag in one hand, and Sophonisba leaning upon his arm in the

favorite attitude of the Goddess of Liberty. A blue light was burning in the bow and stern. They drifted gradually from the view. The purse-proud aristocrat sank senseless on the deck!

"They were never seen afterward! Whether they drifted ashore on the wild promontory of Gibbon's Point and were instantly sacrificed by the natives of that locality; whether they were cast away upon the rocky fastnesses of Goat Island; whether they were sucked in the eddies of Mission Creek, or whether they were fired into by some chivalrous Custom-House officer, exasperated at the sight of that glorious flag and its noble defender, has never been known. It is said, however, that the youth and beauty of San Francisco, walking down the elegant and enchanting promenade of Meigg's Wharf, sometimes hear the delicious strains of 'Ever of Thee!' borne upon the night wind."

THE COUNTESS[1]

I BLUSHED just then as I wrote that word.

I glanced furtively over my desk toward that one dear woman whom it was my privileged happiness to feed and clothe, and turned abashed from the reproachful spectacle of the little stockings and shoes upon the hearth. Heed me not, wife! Spin and weave, O thou pensive Arachne, while I still unravel this tangled web of my past life and count its lost and useless stitches. Sleep on, O Adolphus, my latest born, nor move restlessly in thy slumbers. Better the pangs of colic than the stings of remorse. Happily mayst thou never know the day when Godfrey's Cordial shall no longer bring balm to thy spirit, and paragoric cease to soothe thy repose.

It was twenty years ago this night. I was returning from boarding-school. I was sixteen, and shy. I had that usual tendency of young bipeds to run to legs and neck and bill. My form was gotten up with distinct reference to my retiring disposition — so economic were its principles that I slipped almost noiselessly through the crowded cars of the H. R. R. Road and slid into a seat beside a portly man with whiskers. There was a lady in the seat opposite to me. There is one in this story. They are identical.

I drew a book from the pocket of my sack and abandoned myself to intellectual delights. I do not remember the name of the work. I had bought it from a book peddler, chiefly, I think, on account of the picture of a Countess which adorned, while it explained, the title-page. The story referred to a Countess. I believe that her husband, not-

[redacted] March 24, 1861.

withstanding his high social position, was addicted to highway robbery and murder. A young man only eighteen years of age had been enticed into his den. He was released by the Countess, who fell passionately in love with him. As she knocked off the fetters from his graceful limbs (having previously removed three obstacles, occasionally alluded to throughout the work as "minions," with her "trusty steel"), she gazed on his ingenuous features with an expression of tender admiration and regard, and suddenly shrieked aloud: "Away, womanish timidity and shame! Know, then, O Rudolph, 't is thee I love! thee for whom I live and die." And immediately sank fainting upon his breast!

When I had reached this thrilling climax, I sighed deeply and closed my eyes to allow my soul to dwell freely on the passionate picture, and to permit my lips to murmur again and again the touching and elevated sentiments of the Countess. When I had opened my eyes again, I perceived the sigh had attracted the attention of my companion, who turned her face toward me, and our glances met.

I had a dreadful trick then, which I have not yet gotten over, of staring at people. It may have been an affecting relic of that touching, childish reliance in physiognomy which we so speedily outgrow. It came naturally to me — but it may have been annoying to others. How long I subjected the lady to this mild impertinence I cannot say. But I suddenly became aware that she was smiling encouragingly, at which I blushed violently. In the hope of doing something natural, and half mechanically, I extended my book with a bow. As her thin, dexterous fingers received the courtesy, and turned carelessly over the leaves, I finished the rest of my stare. She was quite pretty and young. Her lips, perhaps, were rather thin, so thin that when she laughed they drew up over her white teeth, and showed another red lip above them. This peculiarity, with her black eyes and

white face a little squared at the lower angles, made her look mysterious and foreign. Her voice was low and musically soft.

She handed me the book in return, with another smile. I accepted both timidly. As I reopened the pages of my interesting romance I discovered, immediately below the thrilling prison scene, a few words in pencil. Again the blood rushed to my cheeks as I read the following: —

"I am an unhappy woman, flying from a brutal husband. I read sympathy in your thrilling glances. You are noble as you are handsome. Can you not sit beside me?"

What young man, oppressed with a doubt of his looks, could resist that latter adjective? — Glowingly I raised my eyes to hers. Her lashes were cast down; she raised them suddenly with a glance, and again settled the fringed lids demurely. My brain swam round and round. I found myself repeating the beautiful expressions of the robber's wife. I looked over to her companion. He was gazing out of the window. I shuddered as if with cold, and closed the window. As I expected, he looked at me with a wrathful expression. I apologized, but "draughts — bronchial affections, — would change seats," etc. The black-bearded man smiled and arose. Unutterable bliss! I slid beside the lady.

We drifted into conversation. She was oppressed by bashfulness; what would I think of her? What could I think of her — Ah, Madam!

In proportion as she appeared reserved, I grew bold. I ventured to cross my legs, and even reknotted the black ribbon of my Byron collar with greater ease and gracefulness. Overcome by my subdued, yet gallant, manner, she related her painful history.

I cannot remember it all. In the long retrospect of the past I fear it is somewhat mixed with the fiction of the [redacted] new only that she was flying

from one whom she did not love; that she feared her late companion was a spy in the service of her husband. That she was unhappy and lone, until she saw a face that she — Oh, dear me!

We dashed under a long bridge, and its darkness favored a bold design, which I had been framing for the last five minutes. I possessed myself of her small hand. I pressed it. The pressure was returned. I raised her glove respectfully to my lips. When we dashed out into the world again, I felt distraught and changed. It was like closing the pages of that thrilling romance.

By degrees day changed to twilight and twilight to darkness. In the partial gloom, her beautiful head sank on my shoulder. I whispered something to her, in an agitated voice. Her reply was, "Anywhere with thee — 't is thee alone I love!" — or words to that effect. I started, the words were so like the Countess.

The conductor approached to collect the fare. I fumbled in my pocket nervously. I had but enough to pay my own fare — all that was left of my scanty pittance. How could I be her moneyless protector! With feminine delicacy she slipped a purse into my hand, and smiled sweetly. I blushed as I opened the purse. It was filled with bank bills — they were all large denominations. I paid the fare. She accepted the change, but begged I would take charge of the purse during the rest of the journey. I appreciated her ladylike delicacy, I gazed fondly upon her. She was a real Countess!

The train still sped on, and station after station was passed. We were to proceed as fast as steam could carry us — to Philadelphia and thence to St. Louis. I had settled in my mind that I would dispatch a letter, at New York, to my expectant parents, bidding them farewell — stating vaguely that I was in the hands of Love and Destiny. In the mean time, at each station, I procured little luxuries

for her, recklessly, with her own money, encouraged by her gratefulness at these attentions, and giving her regularly the change. At Poughkeepsie a singular event took place.

Weave and spin, O Arachne! Sleep on, O Adolphus!

She wanted a railway rug, to keep her small feet warm. I would have preferred, of course, that they should have nestled near my own, as they had done for the last half-hour. But her wishes were paramount, and — it was her own money. I ran to a store near the station. I procured the rug and handed the clerk a $50 bill, the smallest denomination in the purse. It was on the Poughkeepsie Bank. I rolled up the rug and was reëntering the car, when a hand was laid upon my shoulder. I turned. It was the clerk, breathless with running.

"If you please, sir, will you step back with me a moment to the store?"

"Yes, but make haste, we have but five minutes before the train starts."

We reached the store; the proprietor was at the door. A silence ensued, during which he closed the door, and carefully reproduced the $50 bill and handed it to me. "That's a counterfeit bill, sir!"

I looked at him with one of my long, honest stares, which made him look aside a moment and blush as I thought, and then took out my purse. I handed him another bill, amid a profound silence, while I looked haughtily around.

"That is like the other, and *counterfeit*, too!" he replied after a moment's survey.

I hastily unrolled the bills on the counter. They were all on the Poughkeepsie Bank!

"They are not mine — that is," I said hurriedly — "I can explain all in a few moments," and I started toward the door. He anticipated me in a moment, and stood before me.

I felt alarmed. I could not as a gentleman mention the

name of the lady, — in fact I did n't know it; but I begged that one of the gentlemen would accompany me to the station, and —

"The cars are gone already," said the clerk, "and here is Mr. ——, Cashier, and Mr. ——, of the Town police force."

I had a long conversation with Mr. ——, Cashier of the Poughkeepsie Bank, — to whom as a gentleman and man of gallantry I secretly confided my troubles. In company with Mr. ——, of the Town police force, I sat down and wrote that letter to my parents, but altered the names of the parties in whose hands I had fallen. The next day my paternal guardian arrived from New York in company with the gentleman with black whiskers who had been the companion of the lady, and probable spy of her husband. The gentleman with black whiskers identified me at once, and corroborated my statement to the Cashier. I found out afterwards that he was Detective ——; the lady was — not a Countess.

THE PETROLEUM FIEND[1]

A STORY OF TO-DAY

PART ONE

It was a clear night in midsummer. The streets of San Francisco were deserted, and wore that aspect of wind-swept loneliness peculiar to a climate which a local press wildly imagined to be Italian. A few dissipated losels were deviously making their way home by the light of the gas-lamps that flickered tremulously, and of the stars that high up in the breezy heavens winked incessantly, as though they were inclined to shut their eyes on this and a good many other naughty exhibitions of the wicked metropolis. In fact, it was such a night as the devil might be popularly supposed to be abroad; though why he, more than we, should prefer such exposure to an easy-chair and a sparkling fire has, I believe, never been clearly demonstrated.

From the window of a brilliantly lighted apartment in one of the fashionable thoroughfares, Mr. and Mrs. Sparrowhawk looked upon the night. They had been married but a twelve-month. Each being poor and obviously unfitted for the responsibilities of wedlock, their courtship had met with such strenuous opposition from their respective friends as to result, as usual, in a speedy marriage. Mr. Sparrowhawk met the difficulties of his new condition with characteristic philosophy. Returning from the bridal trip, as he handed his last half-dollar to the porter, the loving bride ventured to ask the momentous question: —

"On what are we to live?"

[1] *Californian*, April 19, May 6, 1865.

"On others," was the quiet response.

Hiding her white crape bonnet in his bosom the blushing girl expressed herself satisfied. Through all the financial troubles of the honeymoon she proved herself a worthy helpmeet. Her husband's old creditors looked with dismay as they found the delicate tact and firm instincts of the subtle sex added to the masculine audacity of the male Sparrowhawk. Nor was this all. Her jewelry, purchased on credit, she freely sacrificed. "These trinkets are not mine," reasoned that affectionate creature, "but his"; and she saw them pawned without a struggle.

The sagacious reader will readily imagine from the foregoing that Mr. and Mrs. S. were not engaged in sentimental contemplation of the heavens. The necessity of evading the claims of an impending creditor was just then under discussion, and a natural impulse had brought them both to the window, as if to find some solution of the financial question outside.

"It does seem," said Mr. Sparrowhawk deliberately, "as if the very devil —"

A little scream from his wife arrested him here, and the rest of his profane reflection was lost. And well might Mrs. S. scream. As she turned away from the window with a slight contraction of her pretty brows she suddenly came upon a stranger standing upright in the middle of the floor.

"I beg your pardon," said the intruder, blandly, "but you seem to have been so pleasantly occupied as not to hear my knock. May I hope that I have also spared you the trouble of opening the door for me?"

He was a nice little bald-headed old gentleman, in an evening dress of black, neatly gloved and booted. Perhaps his instep was somewhat too high, and he moved gingerly as if his boots hurt him. But otherwise he was evidently such a *parti* as we are in the habit of meeting every even-

ing in the lobby of the opera or at social gatherings. Mrs. S. recovered herself first — with the readiness of her sex — and begged him to be seated.

"My intrusion will seem the more pardonable, or unpardonable, rather let me say," he added, with an apologetic wave of the hand toward Mrs. S., "when I state that this interruption of a conjugal *tête-à-tête* is occasioned by business. Business with Mr. Sparrowhawk."

Mrs. S., a little mollified, rose as if to depart, but the old gentleman skipped forward with a deprecating gesture: "Pray, don't go — oblige me. Whatever the ungallant opinion of the rest of mankind, permit me to say that I always found your lovely sex of invaluable service in all *my* business arrangements. Besides," he added a little hastily, as if to cover up an inadvertence, "what concerns your husband's welfare concerns you."

Still more mollified, and, I grieve to say, even swallowing this little bit of moral chaff with the rest, Mrs. S. resumed her seat gracefully. Where is the woman who could doubt the sincerity of such a compliment? She may doubt the tribute to her beauty; the sonnet to her amiability; but her business qualifications, never!

"Between men of business," continued the old gentleman, turning to the husband, "a few words suffice. You are a mining secretary?"

"Yes."

Sparrowhawk had an office downtown, the door whereof was ingeniously decorated with the titles of some twenty or thirty companies which had no other existence. Here he regularly read the papers, and published lists, selected at random from the directory, of delinquent stockholders. It certainly was not necessary for the old gentleman to twit him with that.

"And write for the papers?"

A slight glow suffused the cheek of Sparrowhawk! We

all have our weaknesses. Here was a young man, of fine predatory instincts and financial abilities, actually pleased with the accusation of literary effort. He answered quickly in the affirmative, and asked the stranger if he had ever read his articles signed "Brutus."

"Or his 'Monody on the Death of an Infant'?" chimed in Mrs. S.

"No — no," replied the stranger, with a sudden display of nervous energy; "that is — yes; but I shall require your talents in both capacities. Now attend to me for a few moments. Observe this, if you please," and he drew from his breast-pocket a phial of amber-colored liquid and handed it to Mr. Sparrowhawk.

Mr. S. looked at the phial dubiously. Mrs. S., true to her sex's instinct, admired the color.

"Smell it."

Sparrowhawk removed the cork and sniffed at the fluid. Spite of its delicate color it had an abominable sulphurous stench. "Petroleum!" he ejaculated.

"Exactly so. That 's my business. I make it. Say the word and you shall be my agent. You shall puff it and sell it. Salary, twenty thousand for the first year and commissions. Agreement for three years."

Mr. and Mrs. Sparrowhawk gasped for breath. "I beg your pardon," stammered Mr. Sparrowhawk, "but did I understand you to say you made it? I thought it was found — that is, discovered in wells — you know — holes!" And the poor fellow glanced uneasily at the stranger and back again to his wife.

But that noble young woman did not lose her self-possession. "Of course the gentleman said he made it," she replied somewhat pettishly; "and what if he does? There's no great harm in that. What if he keeps a quantity on hand — more than he wants for use? — "

"For use," said the stranger, bowing delightedly.

"On Fuel!" said Mrs. S.

"On Fuel!" repeated the little old gentleman, smiling and rubbing his hands, as he gazed at the bright eyes and excited color of the pretty Mrs. Sparrowhawk.

"Or what if he should want a smart young man to devote himself to his interests at a large salary; there's no harm in that," continued Mrs. S.

"No harm in that," repeated the overjoyed old gentleman.

"Or, if he wanted him to sign an agreement?"

"An agreement!" repeated that venerable echo.

"Why, he'd be a fool if he didn't," was Mrs. Sparrowhawk's somewhat ungrammatical climax.

Poor Sparrowhawk gazed with open mouth at the mysterious visitor and his ally. Before he could find breath to speak, the old gentleman had drawn a document from his pocket and laid it before him. His own wife brought him a pen already dipped in ink.

"Sign!" said the old gentleman.

"Sign!" repeated Mrs. S.

Sparrowhawk took up the pen irresolutely, and hesitated. A struggle took place in his bosom and his better genius prevailed. He laid down the pen. "Give me a half-year's salary in advance," he asked firmly.

"Done," said the old gentleman.

Sparrowhawk signed. At the same moment an earthquake rattled the shelves and jarred the whole house.

"The manufactory is at work," quietly remarked the old gentleman.

Another shock, stronger than before, caused Mr. and Mrs. Sparrowhawk to rush wildly to the door. When their alarm had subsided they turned to their mysterious visitor, but he had disappeared.

THE MANUFACTORY IS AT WORK

PART TWO

Nearly three years of unexampled prosperity had flown over the head of Mr. Sparrowhawk, duly authorized agent of the "Original Petroleum Co." The company was in a flourishing condition. It was true that the superintendent and agent had not met since the mysterious interview we have recorded, but this circumstance did not seem to interrupt business. There were certain unfailing wells belonging to the company, one or two manufactories in full blast, and a central office over which Mr. Sparrowhawk presided. How he kept his books, or to whom he was responsible, was nobody's business. None of the stock was in market, and the stockholders were unknown. Sharp people whispered, "foreign capital"; Mr. Sparrowhawk smiled significantly, but did not deny it.

In fact, he had grown exceedingly opulent and respectable. His name stood foremost on all subscription lists; he was director of half a dozen charitable institutions; and Mrs. S. was the President of a Ladies' Christian Commission for providing wounded soldiers in hospital with Fox's "Martyrs" and Edwards's "Sermons." Mr. S. had a pew in a fashionable church. He rarely wrote poetry now, and only of an inferior quality. But if riches enervated his muse there was compensation in the truth that criticism is always lenient to prosperity. That a man with thirty thousand a year should write any poetry at all was enough for society to be thankful for.

But Mr. Sparrowhawk had of late been subject to fits of gloomy despondency and abstraction, and as the third year drew near its close he grew quite haggard and wan. He would shut himself up for days together studying his agreement, which, like most documents of a similar nature, can be made, by continued perusal, to exhibit any meaning you *choose to give it.* Often in the midst of gay company he

would lapse into a sullen silence, and once, at a dinner-party, given at his palatial residence, the conversation turning upon the late petroleum conflagration in one of the Eastern cities, an unlucky guest, who was giving a graphic account of the burning alive of some unhappy wretches in the streets, was shocked by Mr. Sparrowhawk fainting dead away in his chair. Like Lady Macbeth on a similar occasion, Mrs. Sparrowhawk undertook the disagreeable duty of apologizing to the guests. Unlike that somewhat overrated Scotchwoman, she did it gracefully, and did not commit the egregious blunder of sending the guests away before they had finished their dinner and thus giving them the opportunity of indulging in mischievous remarks. It was observed after this that Mr. Sparrowhawk avoided fires, even on the coldest evenings, and seemed to shun lights and matches as if he had been tinder.

Besides his town residence, he had a magnificent country-house erected on the oil lands of the company, and located over one of the deepest wells in that region. The house was warmed by petroleum fires and lighted by its vapor. Here Mr. Sparrowhawk had invited a number of guests on the occasion of his retiring from the agency — an event which was to be duly celebrated. A select and brilliant circle of admirers and friends of all classes and conditions — clergymen, bankers, brokers, editors, and doctors — all of them more or less interested in petroleum — gathered on that day. A remarkable and peculiar gayety held possession of the host and hostess. Mr. Sparrowhawk had never talked more ably. Mrs. S. had never shone more brilliantly at the head of her festive board. An editor, who was seated on her left, took that occasion to whisper in her ear something about the "Isles of Greece" and "Burning Sappho," but was chagrined that his fair companion did not *blush, but only* turned pale and shuddered. As these *physiological effects* were not inconsequent to so atrocious a

pun, the other guests took no further notice of them. The seat of honor on the right of Mr. Sparrowhawk was occupied by a nice little bald-headed old gentleman, who, by the power of his conversation, had fascinated the whole assembly, and who, as an apparently old friend of the host and hostess, assisted in dispensing the honors of the house. It was the little old gentleman who proposed a visit to the lower regions, and undertook to conduct a number of selected guests through one of the oil shafts and brought them back afterward, smelling strongly of benzoine. It was the little old gentleman who also proposed charades in the private theatre attached to the country-seat, and under whose artistic management a number of surprising and astonishing effects were produced. "Benzine," "Coal Oil," and "Kerosene" were successively spelled out by the company. But the final charade, as the old gentleman remarked, would require some preparation, and would include some new effects which would astonish them. Selecting his actors from the assembled company, he retired behind the curtain. An interval, long enough to enable the audience to indulge in exciting speculation, followed, and then the curtain rose.

As the little old gentleman had truly prophesied, the effect was wonderful and intensely dramatic. The scene before them represented a vast temple brilliantly illuminated. This was singularly effected by a circling row of statues placed on short pedestals at equal distances around the temple — each statue gleaming with incandescent brilliancy. A closer inspection revealed the fact that each figure was represented by some well-known guest, Mr. and Mrs. Sparrowhawk occupying a prominent central position and gleaming with almost insupportable lustre. The bland features of a well-known clergyman beamed gloriously from a conspicuous plinth on the right, while a prosperous banker *glittered and scintillated* on the left. A tremend-

ous round of applause burst from the audience. Suddenly attention was directed to the little old gentleman, who entered upon the scene carrying several large covers like extinguishers. Striding up to each of these animated burners he, one by one, gravely covered them with an extinguisher, beginning with the host and hostess, until the stage, lately so brilliant, was left in total darkness. A slight snuffy smell, in spite of this precaution, pervaded the theatre.

The spokesman consulted a moment with the audience, and then announced the word: —

"Extinguisher."

No answer came from the stage.

The word was repeated.

Still no answer. A little alarmed he leaped upon the stage and lifted the extinguisher which covered Mr. Sparrowhawk. A heap of discolored ashes with a strong petroleum odor was all that lay underneath. He repeated the experiment with Mrs. Sparrowhawk and the remaining statues, but with the same result. Diligent inquiry was made for the little old gentleman, but he was nowhere to be found.

As may be expected, the guests were somewhat embarrassed. But good breeding prevailed, and they quietly returned to town without confusion. A little justifiable indignation was felt toward the host and hostess, but even that was tempered by philosophy, and the most ill-tempered confessed that but little better could be expected from the parties.

So perished Mr. and Mrs. Sparrowhawk. I am aware that this story has no moral. Whatever interest it may have is based entirely upon its merit as a statement of facts.

STORIES FOR LITTLE GIRLS[1]

I HAVE noticed with some indignation a tendency, in the popular stories of childhood, to give all the heroic enterprises to boys, and to utterly ignore girls as adventurous heroines. As daughters predominate in my own family, I humbly protest against their being put off with such feeble notoriety as "Cinderella" affords them, or such doubtful fame as belongs to "Little Red Riding Hood." Firmly believing in the superior energy, tact, and invention of the sex, I consider the latter story, of a wolf deceiving a little girl by personating her grandmother, as the puerile invention of some envious old bachelor, and have felt a consciousness of imbecility in reading it aloud to young ladies, any one of whom I am satisfied would have detected Mr. Wolf in his first hypocritical sentence. As to Cinderella, we all know she had no interest except that conferred on her by the Prince. In point of fact, "Contrary Mary" seems to have been the only young lady in childish fiction who is recorded to have had any independence of character; but even here the masculine chronicler, by simply stating the fact of "contrariness" without explanation, unfairly leaves us to suppose that it was of a purposeless and ineffective quality.

Not content with merely lifting my voice against this injustice, I am convinced that if I have any particular mission, it is to fill this void in the literature of children. The ages have waited for this event, and childish fingers, among which the thumb of Jack Horner appears preëminent, point

[1] *Californian*, May 20, 1865.

to me as the man. I shall not shrink from the appointed task. A shrill chorus of infantile voices applaud my resolution, and with fingers trembling with excitement, I dash into my first effort which is

THE STORY OF MISS MARY CRUSOE

At the age of fifteen, Miss Mary Crusoe undertook a voyage to the South Pacific to visit her desolate aunt, whose husband, a worthy missionary, had lately furnished, in his own person, food and raiment for the benighted islanders. As he did not survive this Christian act, Miss Crusoe's aunt sent for her niece to relieve her increasing loneliness. The voyage had been quite prosperous, but one day a terrific storm came on, and the vessel struck on a rock. Miss Crusoe was the only one that escaped. Buoyed up by her crinoline on a monstrous wave, she was washed on a desert island where she lay for a few moments insensible.

When she recovered her senses, she rose and carefully removed her stockings and spread them on a rock to dry. For a moment she regretted not having brought a change with her from the ship — but a sense of gratitude to Providence for her deliverance checked the foolish thought. She then made a tour of the island, meeting only a few crabs on the beach, who turned quite red at the spectacle of her bare little ankles, and walked away holding their claws before their eyes. But Miss Crusoe did not despair. Finding one of the ship's sails on the beach, she drew a housewife from her bosom, and taking a needle and scissors therefrom, in a very short time made and fitted to her pretty figure a coarse but neat morning wrapper, which she fastened around her waist with the bolt ropes. Having lost her comb in the surf, her back hair came down. A rusty spike which she picked from a portion of the wreck served her for a hair-pin, and the seaweed which still clung to it added ornament to the coiffure. As Miss Mary glanced at her reflection in

a pool of water beside her, a pleasurable blush mantled her cheek at the becoming effect of her costume. But she sighed at the thought that there was no other human eye to behold it.

With a broom made of dried boughs and leaves fastened to a piece of bamboo, Miss Mary swept away the sand from the leeward side of a large rock so as to form a comfortable couch. This she draped with fragments of the old sail, and saying her prayers like a good girl, laid down her fair head on a sandy pillow, and presently fell asleep. The moon came up, and touching the little island here and there with silver radiance, out of respect to Miss Mary's modesty, left her sleeping place in shadow. The waves talked in whispers so as not to disturb her, and the sea-breeze sang a pleasant lullaby. So passed the first day on the island.

The next morning, after a careful toilette and a breakfast of wild grapes, which grew plentifully on the rocks beside her, Miss Mary hastened to the beach. Here she found the sea had providentially washed ashore from the wreck the following articles: A tea-kettle and canister of tea, a bottle of Eau de Cologne, a set of crochet-needles, a few pounds of worsted, some tape, a guitar, an assortment of hairpins, and a box of matches. (If any objection be made to this list as improbable, I point to the masculine inventory of Robinson Crusoe's spoils as a precedent.) After making a cup of tea, Miss Mary confessed she felt better, and at once began the construction of that bower which for years afterward formed her residence on the island. In this she was assisted only by her needle, thread, and scissors. The climate was miraculously mild, and admitted of the lightest material for building purposes. A wild kid which Miss Mary caught during this week was of some service to her as a household pet; this family was afterward increased by two *canaries, a pet* field-mouse, and a jarboe. Not having

the slightest idea what this latter animal may be, I am unable to describe it. It is peculiar to desert islands I am told.

But even these companions failed to give Miss Mary suitable society. Her domestic duties were growing exceedingly onerous. She was in despair, and her young cheek grew pale and thin. One day, while walking on the beach at the extremity of the island, she perceived a footprint in the sand. It was of a female gaiter of a large size, evidently a No. 10, while Miss Mary wore a $2\frac{1}{2}$, narrow. There could be no mistake; some other woman had trodden the lonely shore. When Miss Mary had recovered from the shock of her surprise, she deliberated calmly. With feminine quickness she reasoned that it would be impossible for two women to live on equal terms together on a desert island. Some one must dominate. Miss Mary, with a determined shake of her pretty head, made up her mind who that one should be. The next day the beach was strewn with fragments of a wreck, and she discovered that an emigrant ship from Ireland to Australia had gone ashore upon the fatal rocks. Providence again smiled kindly on Mary Crusoe. She encountered the mysterious castaway, who proved to be a stout woman with a North-Country accent. The astonished Celt instinctively saluted Miss Crusoe as "Missus." This settled the matter. Miss Crusoe engaged her on board-wages, and called her "Biddy," which is the feminine for "Man Friday."

The history of Miss Mary Crusoe from this point to her final deliverance from the island, becomes somewhat uninteresting. As she married the young sailor who rescued her, the merit of the story as a narrative of purely feminine adventure, of course, is lost. She brought her pets with her to New York, and, as her female acquaintances declare, a *good many foreign* airs also. She stuck up her nose at the *best hotels of that* city, and talked somewhat ostentatiously

about "her island." For this reason I deem it prudent to end her history here.

The above is merely a specimen of what I expect to do in the way of filling the void I have spoken of. I propose hereafter to give a short sketch of "Susan the Giant Killer," and "Jane and her Rose Tree." Until then, I wait the recognition of a grateful juvenile public.

MISCELLANEOUS

1860–1870

SHIPS [1]

In the mind of every naturally developed boy, there is a distinct impression that fortune is intimately associated with the sea, and a strong leaning toward *ships!* To every grown-up masculine member of my species there must at times occur recollections of days when he cut oblong billets of wood into ravishing models of ships, which, when launched, had a common propensity to keel over, and continue the rest of the voyage, bottom up. Without mentioning anything about that one unparalleled ship which every boy has loved and lost — I pass to a few general associations connected with this subject, of course altogether unprofessional, which comprise the experience of a landsman.

The child's ships: The ships furtively read about under the desks at school, and by the firelight at dark before candles came. The ship that was wrecked so opportunely for Robinson Crusoe, and the ship he constructed. Noah's Ark. The ship of Philip Quarles. The ship in which Bernardin de St. Pierre cruelly wrecked poor Virginia (when she might just as well have been saved) for the sake of displaying that sickly French sentiment which, thank God, few children understand. The dreadful ship in which Captain Kidd sailed and sailed. The ships in which Sinbad made his wonderful voyages. The Phantom Ship.

The boy's ships and the ships of schools: Argo, Theseus, and his black sails. Old Roman galleys with their many banks of oars. The Viking's ditto. High-pooped semi-lunar barques of Columbus and Amerigo Vespucci. The many galleries and stubby masts of the illustrations in Froissart's

[1] *Golden Era*, November 25, 1860.

"Chronicles." Brave old bully Van Tromp's kettle-bottomed galliots with Dutch brooms at their royal mast-heads. The "Fighting Téméraire." The Greek caïques and the triangular lateen sails of the Mediterranean. Chinese junks with matting sheets. The wicked, rakish-looking crescent-topped ship of the Algerine corsair, and all the rest of that wonderful fleet which pass over the sea of reading, exchanging signals with the weary schoolboy.

In my character as landsman, having a liking — albeit it is a distrustful fascination — for the deceitful and "feline" element, no alloy enters into my affection for the dear old ships. Even now I recognize their burly cheerful presence as I did when a boy, and have a strong inclination to go up to them and pat their big sides as they lie tied down by their noses to the wharves, even as I did then. For I have not entirely gotten over the idea that a ship is endowed with sentient life — a strong and willing beast of burden — good-natured and lovable in its very strength. An incident which I once witnessed, which would in many have materialized the whole idea, only seemed to strengthen that fancy — a shipwreck! The ship lay over a little bight, and her old vassal had her at a wicked vantage. Every time the cruel sea lifted its merciless white arm to smite, it seemed to me that the ship recoiled in affright, and again bounded toward the shore as if for succor. Every curve that the sweeping mast described in the heavens was the writhing of agony and distress; the wild tossing of the hanging yards were the outstretched hands of an expiring swimmer; and when at last the wreck was complete, and you could see only the breakers that fought and wrangled over the spot, a year afterward, passing there at low tide, the bleached ribs and battered skeleton, seemed things to be put away and buried from the sight of man forever.

[redacted] two other incidents, which, impressing me [redacted]y have formed the mould to shape this

odd fancy. As they may be new to some of my readers I give them more in detail: —

The first was a strange story in connection with a seaside village where I had been sent at a sickly, callow age to be preserved in brine. There had been a port of entry there once, and a good harbor still existed, but the ships perhaps for certain reasons had taken a dislike to it, and persistently went somewhere else. For, fifty years ago, one pleasant summer evening, the inhabitants walking on the little break-water, saw a goodly ship in the offing, standing on and off, till night fell. The news of the ship spread from lip to lip, and great was the expectation and surmise created. At daybreak the next day the village was astir, and then everybody saw the ship with all sail set standing in to the harbor. She crossed the bar easily at about eight o'clock and entered the stream. The harbor-master in his boat hailed her, but received no reply. She kept her course with all sail set directly for the wharf. Then the harbor-master and some few others pulled alongside, and, clambering over the bulwarks, jumped on deck. To their surprise it was vacant. The wheel was lashed amidships, the running-gear carefully belayed, and everything taut and seamanlike. They went below, but found no evidence of life. A fire was burning in the galley and a pot of coffee remaining on the stove. In the tenantless cabin the table was set apparently for breakfast. Still more singular, books and papers, and all that might lead to identification, were likewise gone. Clothing, bedding, stores, etc., were still there. There were no evidences of violence; the decks were spotless, the brass stanchions polished, and everything neat and orderly as though the usual routine of careful discipline had been only interrupted at the moment of boarding. Messages were dispatched to the nearest shipping point, and in the mean time she was moored in the stream and a *watch placed on* board. That night one of the

terrible thunderstorms peculiar to New England swept over the little village. Above the whistling wind and the crash of thunder, people living near the water's edge declared they heard the rattling of ropes and creaking of a windlass. An old weather-beaten tar who lived at the point saw, by the aid of a night-glass and the flashing of lightning, a large ship, with all sail set, crossing the bar at the flood of the tide. When morning dawned, the ship was gone. Of course there were not wanting those who believed that the ship-keepers ran away with the mysterious vessel — as neither ship nor watch were ever heard of since; but my childish fancy always inclined to the more popular belief that the ship ran away with them. I remember that often at sunset I would watch the horizon when the tide was flooding on the bar to meet that other flood of outgoing crimson glory; waiting in the half-fearful, half-adventurous hope of seeing a mysterious ship standing off and on, as in the olden time.

The other is a waif from some book of travels. It was an adventure of some French Voyager. It might have been told by Dampierre, but I have forgotten. My gallant French captain is a gentleman born, and they call him M. le Comte, and he has estates in Brittany, and has a commission in the breast-pocket of his laced coat, signed by Louis XIV. He has a fine ship, and a jolly, rollicking crew, and his officers are young men of family and honor. He has gotten up in pretty high latitudes for a Frenchman, and has traced a line along the 75th parallel to be followed years after by Parry, Scoresby, Franklin, and Kane. Here they are beset in the pack, and there they all stay for six months. M. le Comte frets and fumes. The crew all fret and fume. One or two mutinies break out, and the young officers have an occasional "affair" with each other on the ice behind the hummocks. Polar hibernation don't agree with fiery young Frenchmen, and when one or two are on the point of com-

mitting suicide through sheer *ennui*, a sail is discovered in an open sea to the southward. There is great speculation made; she is signaled, but does not answer. They can't get to her, though she apparently hovers near them for many days. At last the ice breaks up, and out fly the lively Gauls like peas from a pod. M. le Comte steers to the southward with his impetuous brethren. Then the strange ship is seen, and a boat is dispatched by M. le Comte, in charge of a fiery young Gascon — a Lieutenant. The strange ship is a vessel of six hundred tons burthen, and when they hail her she does not respond. Then the ire of the young Gascon is aroused, and he orders his men to lay him alongside. This the men do reluctantly, and at last the bow-oar throws his blade apeak, and declares that the Devil is in the strange ship, and that he won't pull another stroke. Then a great fear seizes the rest of the boat's crew, and they all begin to pull about.

"Oh, ho! What is this, my children?" says the young Gascon.

"Parbleu, M. Lieutenant! We are going back, and not to the Devil's ship."

"Do you think so, my pretty ones? Excuse me, my darlings, not now."

And so M. Lieutenant draws from his belt a heavy trumpet-mouthed pistol, such as Drake and Frobisher carried in their arm-chests, and looks at the priming, then at the bow-oar. So the bow-oar can do nothing but pull about again, and they all give way together until the boat grazes the sides of the strange ship. Then the fiery young Lieutenant mounts the deck alone, and sees the sails hanging loosely, and everything in confusion. There is a man standing at the wheel, and the gay young Lieutenant calls him "Brother," and asks him if this is the way he receives company, and slaps him on the back, but immediately recoils in horror. For *the man* at the wheel is simply a frozen corpse

WANTED — A PRINTER[1]

(Suggested to Bret Harte by His Employment as a Compositor on the "Golden Era")

"WANTED — a printer," says a contemporary. Wanted, a mechanical curiosity, with brain and fingers — a thing that will set so many type in a day — a machine that will think and act, but still a machine — a being who undertakes the most systematic and monotonous drudgery, yet one the ingenuity of man has never supplanted mechanically — that 's a printer.

A printer — yet for all his sometimes dissipated and reckless habits — a worker. At all times and hours, day and night; sitting up in a close, unhealthy office, when gay crowds are hurrying to the theatre — later still, when the street revelers are gone and the city sleeps — in the fresh air of the morning — in the broad and gushing sunlight — some printing machine is at the case, with its eternal unvarying *click! click!*

Click! click! the polished type fall into the stick; the mute integers of expression are marshaled into line, and march forth as immortal print. *Click!* and the latest intelligence becomes old — the thought a principle — the simple idea a living sentiment. *Click! click!* from grave to gay, item after item — a robbery, a murder, a bit of scandal, a graceful, a glowing thought — are in turn clothed by the impassive fingers of the machine, and set adrift in the sea of thought. He must not think of the future, nor recall the past — must n[illegible]ded, of wife or

of babe — his work lies before him, and thought is chained to his copy.

Ye who know him by his works, who read the papers and are quick at typographical errors — whose eye may rest on these mute evidences of ceaseless toil: correspondents, editors, and authors, who scorn the simple medium of your fame, think not that the printer is altogether a machine — think not that he is indifferent to the gem to which he is but the setter — but think a subtle ray may penetrate the recesses of his brain, or the flowers that he gathers may not leave some of their fragrance on his toil-worn fingers.

WASHINGTON[1]

THE resemblance of a face long dead, with clear, blue eyes and massive, slumbering features, has been to me a familiar presence. Out of the past that serene face has been lifted with sublime suggestion, as to my boyish fancy the mighty Sphinx lifted its passionless eyes and immovable lips from the century dust that hid its awful shoulders. When, as a child, I read hesitatingly from the book upon my knee of this wonderful man, whose face I knew, I could only look upon him as the conception of a principle, which like the mythological creation had taken the form and figure of humanity. I could not expect to see him or know him but as something vague and past.

But chiefly because I had had enough of Hector and Achilles, and more of Agamemnon; and a great deal too much of that glittering staff of general officers and brave men since the Grecian general, I did not turn to him as a mighty warrior. But I knew of him — patient and strong in the winter camp at Valley Forge. Again and again, looking down that dreary valley I have seen the snow falling, and, in mercy to the general's prayer, blotting out the crying eloquence of the blood-stained tracks of frost-bitten and weary feet. I have seen this struggling poverty and suffering with that quick appreciation known best, I think, to the Northern boy. I have pictured the crossing of the Delaware in a way that made the painter's canvas a feeble show, and so from the fear that I might make a sectional man out of this Washington, I went to hear of him from one who was a seer and a magician, and who knew the truth and dared to show it.[2]

[1] *Golden Era*, February 24, 1861.

[2] *Rev. T. Starr King, Pastor of the U[redacted], San Francisco, California.*

Then, wrought upon by the magic of an eloquent tongue and eye and hand, the dead Washington again arose. The stone was rolled away from the sepulchre, and the waiting goddess with wings trailing in the dust again welcomed the Hero. He beamed luminously through that crowded and awe-hushed chamber — not the Washington of history, but the living man, sympathetic and human, with every chord of his great soul thrilling responsive with that audience, whose every pulse kept time with the perfect movement of his own.

And when the silence fell with the hushed magic of that orator's wonderful voice, the sea below him broke again in great reacting waves of applause against the walls of the chamber. Then the spellbound audience arose from their cramped positions and went wonderingly away as in a dream.

But the echo of that voice and the spell of that Presence had not died away in their hearts. For some time after, when the noise of wheels broke the stillness of quiet streets, and footfalls echoed from the walls of darkened houses, people were constrained to speak as they walked along of that resurrected Presence of which they had known so much and yet so little. And they talked it over at breakfast-tables the next morning, nor dreamed that this was the magician's art. I wonder if it were?

And so the anniversary of the birth of George Washington passed quietly away. When night came, the moon riding high in the heavens seemed to look down upon the resurrected face of the dead hero, as on that night above the crags of Latmos she touched and strove to wake the sleeping Endymion. When the fog veiled her face at last, there was a clear blue heaven at the north, and the pole star glittered above the crest of the distant hill.

And with the stars and night, a fierce west wind arose from the sea, and moving landward swept over the city, caught the bunting of the shipping, and drifted it steadily

toward the east. It straightened and stiffened the red bars of the national flag in its sturdy breath, and then swept away on its mission.

Oh, if the day of omens be not passed, would it have been wrong to have whispered it "God speed" on that mission? That it might meet and greet our Eastern brothers as the grateful land wind met the first discoverer of our ever-blessed country, even in the midst of mutiny and despair? That it might steal into the hearts of the rebellious crew of that laboring ship of State, as the west wind, fragrant with the spiced breath of the welcoming land, stole into the senses of the distracted mutineers and drew them gently to the land?

THE ANGELUS[1]

As I sit by my window in the sharp shadows of this flinty twilight, the faint far tolling of a bell comes to me with a peculiar significance. I have been looking over the Mission Valley along a prospective, shut in by the lonely mountain and its shining cross. In the middle distance a few incisive looking roofs oppose their hard outlines to the sky. The steeple of St. John's in the wilderness has a bigoted way of pointing its uncompromising pinnacles upward — but that 's owing to the atmosphere, and it 's easy to look beyond to the sincere lonely mountain and its crowning cross.

I can fancy also a strange sympathy with the Angelus, from the hills capped and cowled with fog like gray friars, to the sun, prematurely and mistily going down with a red disk like the descending Host. I am conscious, too, of feeling something like the Captive Knight who looked "from the Paynim tower," and am half convinced that telling beads, playing upon a lute, and tracing my name with a rusty nail upon the window ledge would be a very natural and appropriate expression. But a shriek from the Mission locomotive brings back the Nineteenth Century — and lo, the Angelus is dead. A motherly cow walks up and down the street as if she were hired to give a rural effect to the locality. A mild fragrance of tea, bread, and butter rises from the area railings. The long sidewalks have a dreary and wind-swept loneliness — the Angelus has only rung home a few married men, belated, who have lost their dinners, and who taste a bitter premonition of their welcome in the shrewish air.

[1] *Golden Era*, October 19, 1862.

With this formal symbol of Faith still ringing in my ears, a few unbeliefs of my childhood oddly recur to me. I think that children are much more skeptical on religious subjects than most people imagine; I know that my first hypocrisy was on such topics.

Why do I recall with a tingling of the cheeks my infant knowledge of the Heathen? Why does the blush of shame mantle my brow as I look back to the systematic deceit I practiced in reading a certain book entitled "Conversation between a Converted Heathen and a Missionary"? Did I dislike that Heathen in his unconverted state? No! Did I not rather rejoice in his tuft of plumes, his martial carriage, his oiled and painted skin? Was not his conduct creditable and romantic compared with that dreadful Missionary who resembled the Sunday-School Teacher, who systematically froze my young blood? What did they offer me instead? Had I any respect for an imbecile black being who groveled continually, crying "Me so happy — bress de lor! send down him salvation berry quick," in uncouth English? Believed I in his conversion? Did I not rather know, miserable little deceiver that I was, that during this conversation his eyes were resting on the calves of that Missionary's legs with anthropophagous lust and longing?

The Angelus brings likewise the "Children's Hour" — mentioned by Mr. Longfellow. But the "blue-eyed banditti" of this vicinity do not confine their raids to demonstrative embraces in the library, but congregate on the sidewalks and demand each other's gingerbread with a more sincere conception of the character. Nursery-maids occasionally air their young charges, and compare bonnet-strings on the steps. There is a very round little boy who makes a point of falling down at the top of the hilly street, and begins to roll to the bottom with the most alarming rapidity. But some one is sure to stop him on the way. From his *peculiar conformation*, it is terrible to think of an omission

of this customary check, which he seems to confidently look for on every occasion.

So with the pleasant voices of children, the Angelus, the fragrance of bread and butter, and the abiding influence of old memories, the day fades into night. As the darkness slips from the Contra Costa hills a light comes out brightly and hopefully. It is pleasant to know that all hours of the night it may be seen there, undimmed and unquenched. Looking off from this lonely tower I am strengthened, and am inclined to so far imitate the lonely captive as to write with a diamond upon the pane the line that flashes with that light upon my memory. It was written above Dr. Kane's Journal in the longer Arctic night: "Keeping our trust, in darkness."

ARTEMUS WARD[1]

ARTEMUS WARD has gone. The Showman has folded his exhibition tent like the Arab and silently stolen away. But like the Arab, Artemus has been accused of certain Bedouin-like qualities, and has been viewed by some interior critics as a literary raider — scouring the face of the land and skimming the fatness thereof. Others have thought themselves humbugged at his lectures and openly assert that his "Babes" are stuffed with sawdust — the sawdust of old circus arenas at that.

Of course this sort of thing is new to Californians. They are by nature excessively cautious. They never invest money in doubtful speculations. They are never carried away by excitements, and it is clear that if Artemus has issued stock at a dollar a share and people consider it don't pay, the imposition is altogether unprecedented and worthy of reprehension.

But has it been an imposition? Did Artemus by implication or reputation profess more than he has accomplished?

He came to us as the author of an admirable series of sketches which exhibit a special type of humor. It is not exactly the highest nor the most ennobling type. Artemus is not the greatest American humorist, nor does he himself profess to be, but he deserves the credit of combining certain qualities which make him the representative of a kind of humor that has more of a national characteristic than the higher and more artistic standard. His strength does not lie simply in grotesque spelling — that is a mechanical trick *suggested* by his education as a printer — and those who

[1] *Golden Era*, December 27, 1863.

have gone to hear him in this expectation have been properly punished — but it is the humor of audacious exaggeration — of perfect lawlessness; a humor that belongs to the country of boundless prairies, limitless rivers, and stupendous cataracts. In this respect Mr. Ward is the American humorist, *par excellence*, and "his book" is the essence of that fun which overlies the surface of our national life, which is met in the stage, rail-car, canal and flat boat, which bursts out over camp-fires and around bar-room stoves — a humor that has more or less local coloring, that takes kindly to, and half elevates, slang, that is of to-day and full of present application. The Showman has no purpose to subserve beyond the present laugh. He has no wrongs to redress in particular, no especial abuse to attack with ridicule, no moral to point. He does not portray the Yankee side of our national character as did Sam Slick, partly because there is a practical gravity and shrewdness below the clockmaker's fun — but chiefly because it is local rather than national. He has not the satirical power of Orpheus C. Kerr.

Of such quality was Artemus Ward's literary reputation as received by us. And yet some people are surprised and indignant that his late lectures exhibited this lawless construction — that he gave us fun without application. This is a pretty hard criticism from people who are content to go night after night to the Minstrels and listen to the pointless repetition of an inferior quality of this humor. But it affords a key to their criticism. Let the Minstrel wash his face — and remove his exaggerated shirt-collar — and how long will they stand his nonsense? When a keen-looking, fashionably-dressed young fellow mounts the stage and begins to joke with us in this fashion without the accessories of paint or costume, we feel uneasy. Had Artemus appeared habited as the Showman, surrounded by a few wax figures, even the most captious critic would have been satisfied.

Artemus Ward's career in California has been a pecuniary success. The people have paid liberally to see the Showman, and he has reaped a benefit greater than he might have made from the sale of his works. It was a testimonial to the man's talent, which is not objectionable *per se* — though better judgment might have kept the subscription paper out of his own hand. It is a success that will enable him for some time to live independent of mere popularity — to indulge his good taste and prepare something more enduring for the future. In the mean time no one enjoying the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with his frank, genial nature; none who have observed his modest and appreciative disposition, or the perfect health and vigor that pervades his talent, will grudge him that success.

FIXING UP AN OLD HOUSE[1]

When I had secured the possession of my new home, and stood in its doorway, thoughtfully twirling the key in my hand, the words of the retiring tenant struck me with renewed intensity and vigor. "It's a snug little cottage," he had said, confidentially, "and a cheap rent — but it wants to be painted and papered bad." As I looked around it, I could not help thinking that one of these requirements had already been met — that it *had* been "papered bad," and that its present ragged, torn, and dirty walls looked better now than they must have looked in the primal horrors of their original paper. There was something peculiarly provoking about the old pattern, which bore marks of having been picked at here and there as if by exasperated and vicious fingers. But the rent was cheap, and Mr. Chase had said, "Economy was the lesson of the times"; and as an humble employee of that officer and a recipient of his notes, I could not do better than take the advice and the house, which I did at once.

"Why could n't you paper it yourself?" asked my wife suddenly, with a gleam of inspiration. "You know that you 're —" But she did not proceed any further in this feminine attempt to associate my literary habits with this branch of upholstering, and only said: "You might do it after office hours instead of writing, and you 'd save money by it."

The house was not large, and as I could look forward to finishing it within a reasonable time during my leisure hours, I rashly consented to put aside my pen and take up the

[1] *California*, July 16, 1864.

paint- and paste-brush. The choice of paper next occupied and perplexed me for some days; it was odd how critical and fastidious my taste in regard to patterns developed with this first opportunity I ever had to indulge it. After some hesitation I finally selected two kinds, but I had not proceeded far before I discovered that the most charming pattern was extremely difficult to match and involved a waste of material that was as ruinous to my pocket as it was knowingly profitable to the losel knave who sold it to me. This was my first intimation of difficulties. I would willingly pass over the rest. I would like to forget the singular propensity which that paper displayed to entwine itself lovingly in damp curves around my legs, and how I vainly endeavored to evade its chaste and cold embrace as I was putting it on. It is not pleasant to think how I papered one side of the room before I discovered that the pattern was upside down, and how during this time I felt generally of the paste, pasty, and could n't rid myself of the uncomfortable impression that I was a loaf of bread not quite done. Let me hurry over these things to that day when I found myself standing in abject humility before a paper-hanger whom I had finally been obliged to call in. He was a serious man of about forty, with a becoming pride in his profession. After casting a rapid and supercilious glance around the walls, he approached my paste-bucket, and taking a little of the mixture on his finger, smelt of it, and tasted of it. As he turned away with a pained yet forgiving smile on his fine features, I ventured to humbly ask his opinion of my work. "As a amatoor I 've looked at wuss walls nor that," he replied, somewhat vaguely. At any other time I would have been tickled with the idea of an amateur paper-hanger, but I am ashamed to say that my failures had brought me to such a low state of moral dejection that I *eagerly seized* this miserable straw, and subsequently gave *him to understand,* in rather general terms, that I was

possessed of a singular monomania for paper-hanging; that it was not economy, but love of a noble profession which had incited my work, and that, in the language of William Birch, "my parents were wealthy."

I should state here that my labors during that time had been materially assisted by the presence of several white-headed but youthful denizens of the neighborhood, who, having at first watched my progress by flattening their snub noses against the window, finally grew bolder and came in and out of the house and assisted me in removing the old paper, scattering it far and wide through the streets, and also otherwise proffered their assistance and learned to address me by name, and to whom I offered a kind of providential excitement in the reaction which followed the fierce festivities of the Fourth.

My ill success in papering did not, however, deter me from my original resolution of painting the house. Accordingly, I procured what seemed to me to be an extraordinary quantity of white lead, and, armed with two brushes, seriously set myself to work. Here my progress was marked with complete success. It was evidently a more scientific and higher profession than my previous one, and I reflected with satisfaction that it was next to frescoing — and what was Michael Angelo but a fresco painter? Yet I could not help noticing that, although the paint looked white when it was first applied, it gradually faded out and permitted primal stains to appear — "damned spots" that would not "out" — and that singular drops — pearly tears — broke out along the joints and panels of the doors. Finally, when the whole wood-work had taken to weeping, I was forced — I write it with shame — to call in a painter — a remarkably polite man — who praised my mechanical dexterity, but informed me courteously that in mixing the color I had omitted some important ingredient. This I had remedied somewhat *by the extra quantity* of paint I had used. "It's no[illegible]

— nothing — a mere trifle; an accident that frequently occurs," he remarked, with genuine good breeding. "It will take a week or two longer to dry, that 's all; and then you can give it another coat"; and bowed himself out of my presence. I may support his assertion by stating that it still exhibits a wonderful humidity and stickiness, sufficient to retain incautious visitors in the position they often assume in leaning against it, and that I keep a small sponge and turpentine constantly on hand against accidents. In the mean time there is a mild suggestion of its presence in the odor that fills the house — an odor that is not unhealthy, as my polite painter assures me he has worked in it for fifteen years and never found it even disagreeable.

The usual effect of partial renovation gradually developed itself in my new house. Each improvement threw into new and unexpected relief some defect which otherwise might have passed unnoticed. Thus, new paper rendered fresh paint an imperative necessity. Presently I discovered that the doors wanted fixing and the windows new weights, and that a carpenter was required. As a friend had recommended to me a workman whom he described as a "good fellow and the very man I wanted," I engaged him at once.

He certainly was a good fellow. Our terms of agreement were that he should superintend the work, and I should render him such assistance as lay in my power. Having entered heartily into all my plans and the difficulties of my situation, he began his arduous duties by an animated and desultory conversation in which he delivered an account of his past life and history. Digressing easily and gracefully into the present topics, he gave me his opinion of the war and described the situation before Richmond by a diagram drawn on a board with a piece of chalk. Before we had definitely settled the success of Grant, it was high noon, and declining his invitation to drink with him, I took the opportunity, *while he was absent at* lunch, to drive a few nails and plane

off the top of a door. When he returned we continued our conversation by the aid of more diagrams, until nightfall when we had put up two shelves, driven half a dozen nails, and used up all our chalk. The assistance I rendered him was not clearly definite. I think it amounted to handing him nails when required, and bringing him tools out of his chest. But he was a very good fellow. When we parted at night he assured me that he liked to work for a gentleman that was quiet and sociable-like, and promised to bring me a newspaper containing some lines written on the death of his cousin's child by scarlet fever. He charged me, I think, five dollars, but he was a clever fellow, and we got along together very well; and I am now seriously considering whether I shall not employ him in fitting up my next new house.

ON A PRETTY GIRL AT THE OPERA[1]

BEING at the Opera the other night, I chanced to be seated near an exceedingly pretty girl. For various reasons, I shall not attempt to describe her here. I might as well try to convey the effect of that particular passage of Donizetti which seemed an accompaniment of her loveliness, by introducing the musical score at this point, as to describe the bright beauty of her face in those formal epithets and somewhat serious and decorous sentences which my thoughts are apt to assume in the process of composition. Had I the glowing pen of a Cobb, a Braddon, or a Southworth, or could I borrow for a moment the graceful style of that ingenious young person who writes the love-stories for "Harper's Magazine," I think I could fire each masculine bosom with an inventory of her charms. I say masculine, as women do not always sympathize with our delineation of their sex's loveliness, and are apt, when we allude to flowing ringlets or a beautiful complexion, to question the genuineness of the one and the ownership of the other. I leave the task to more competent hands. Even as Falstaff spoiled his voice by the too early "singing of anthems," so perhaps I have been unduly impressed in my youth by those short-hand axioms which were the text of my copy-book, and caught not only the outline and letter, but much of the formal seriousness of the original. Perhaps the young beauty detected traces of this quality of mind in my lugubrious visage and the sad civility of my demeanor, for she allowed her lorgnette to rest upon me with a frank and fearless simplicity which a few years ago I might have foolishly misin-

[1] *Californian*, November 5, 1864.

terpreted. Ah me! I knew only too well why she did so, now, and why she slyly glanced but once at the brisk young fellows who lined the walls, and pensively sucked the handles of their canes. She saw that I was harmless. Her quick feminine instincts told her that I had already fallen in the toils of her strategic sex — perhaps something about my hair betokened the frequent presence of infant fingers, and even the careless movement of my right foot thrown over my left leg betrayed the habit of figurative journeys to Banbury Cross in quest of that apochryphal old horse-woman. O my brother Benedicks, we may assume the youthfulness and habiliments of twenty-one, we may jest and wear our chains with a wild and hysterical freedom; somewhere about us we carry the private mark of the one woman who controls our destinies — a mark invisible to ourselves, but one by which the rest of her sex know and weigh us. We detect it not in others — the knowledge is peculiar to them — a terrible freemasonry which obtains among these guileless creatures to an extent which I sometimes shudder to think of. And yet — and it is another reason why my fair young friend dropped that mask of coquetry which is woman's natural weapon of defense — she knew that by virtue of my very condition I held her at a disadvantage. I knew how much artifice went to make up the *ensemble* of that charming figure. I knew the disenchanting processes which ended in such an enchanting result. I had peeped into the veiled mysteries which surround the feminine toilette, and knew —

But the music changed, and my thoughts, changing with it as the curtain rose, spared me the unmanly disclosure. How pretty she looked as she leaned slightly forward, her white cloak dropping from her bare little shoulder as the mists might have slipped down Mount Ida and disclosed the sacred summits to the dazzled shepherd. Then it was that *Capricornicus, father* of half a dozen grown-up daughters,

leaned forward, too, and applied his opera-glass to eyes whose wickedness even that fashionable media could not make respectable. Then it was that, seeking to escape his scrutiny, she raised her glass to the opposite wall where seventeen young gentlemen, splendidly attired, and having a general atmosphere of kid gloves about them, were decently ranged. Poor girl! Instantly seventeen opera-glasses were leveled, and seventeen hands went up to an equal number of neckties to arrange them as she gazed. There was one exception. One young man modestly dropped his eyes and affected deep concern, just then, with the business of the stage, while a deep flush mounted his cheeks. He was evidently thinking of the girl, while the others were thinking of themselves. However, she did not seem to notice it, and the sincerer compliment, as usual, passed unheeded. Her mission that evening was to be observed — not to observe. The object of her existence was fulfilled in looking pretty.

Perhaps there is no gift of nature that requires as little exertion on the part of the owner as personal beauty. I am not certain but that it is this very absence of effort which excites our admiration; for it is one of the cruel paradoxes of life that the very attempt to please often militates against the desired result. A few yards from my fair friend sat a plainer young girl, who by amiability of manner was evidently seeking to impress the gentleman at her side; on the next bench an intelligent-looking little brunette was as evidently exerting her talents of conversation to the same end. Yet there sat my pretty girl, unconsciously absorbing even the wandering attention of those gallants; there she was, enchanting, bewitching — what you will — with no exertion on her part, nay, without even tickling the masculine vanity by giving them the least reason to suppose that *any scintillation* of her dark eyes was induced by them. *Still more: there* was an artful suggestion of the very quali-

ties which belonged to her neighbors in her beauty. There was amiability nestling in the curves of her dimpled cheeks, brightness and intelligence in the quick turn of her eye, love in its liquid depths, piety in its upward glance, modesty in the downward sweep of its maiden fringes. Yet if her performance of these virtues kept well in the rear of her promises, who was to blame? A burst from the orchestra obviated any answer to that last question, and I turned toward the stage.

I have forgotten the exact plot of the opera; suffice that it was the old duet of Love and Youth; the pleasing fiction, which we always accept, that genuine passion finds its best interpreter in the tenor and soprano voices; that all vice is of a baritone quality; that disappointed love or jealousy seeks an exponent in the contralto: and that, whatever may be our trials, we have a number of sympathizing friends always handy in the chorus. As the handsome tenor, glittering with gold-lace, velvet, and spangles, gallantly leads the black-eyed soprano, equally resplendent and unreal, in satin and jewels, down to the footlights, and pours forth his simulated passion in most unnatural yet romantic song, I cannot help a slight stirring at my breast and turn toward my beauty, as if she were in some way a part of the performance. I can't help thinking how pleasant it would be were I a few years younger, and she would permit me to ramble with her, hand in hand, under the canvas trees beside the pasteboard rocks; to sit at her feet as she reclined on the bank at the R. U. E., and so tell her of my passion in B natural. I would promise, and we should mutually agree, that our engagement should not go beyond the clasping of hands, amidst the voices of a joyful chorus, as the curtain descends before the winking footlights. I have my doubts about the romance extending further. In the absence of any opera which goes beyond the simple act of espousal, I *should hesitate. I* have sometimes been tormented with

vague surmises as to what became of the heroines I have so often seen happily disposed of at the fall of the curtain. I fear that within a month after the marriage of the Daughter of the Regiment, Toneo addressed his wife somewhat after this fashion: "Now, my dear, considering your aunt's prejudices and the circles in which we move, you really must try to get over that infernal barrack-room slang"; or, sarcastically, "Oh! I suppose that was when you were in the army"; or, vindictively, when Sulpice came to see her, "D—— me, madam, if a regiment of fathers-in-law ain't drawing it a little too heavy." I have no doubt that Amina often had that circumstance of being found in the Count's bedroom thrown in her face by her credulous spouse; and if Miss Linda of Chamounix succeeded in explaining the circumstances of that little Parisian episode in her life, satisfactorily to her husband, it 's more than she has done to me.

I would not have the thoughtless reader suppose that this terrible picture of matrimonial experience is at all biased. Can any one doubt from Madelaine's character that she did not lead the poor Postillion of Lonjumeau a devil of a life after she finally captured him? or that she did not occasionally make him feel who had the money, and talk hypocritically of her dear deceased aunt in the Isle of France, when he had a fellow-actor down to dinner? I fear, too, that there is no musical accompaniment which can lend an air of romance to the bringing-up of a small family, and that Mozart himself could n't invest whooping-cough with harmony, or express croup, even with the air of a bassoon, in a manner that would be entertaining. And the more that I look at my young beauty as she laughs and chats away at her companion, I fear that I should not choose her for any of the emergencies I have just suggested, were I one of those who are standing against the wall, pensively sucking *their canes.* *Why I* should not is a question that as I am

about to answer the curtain falls, and with the sudden extinguishing of the bright but unreal world beyond, as if she were a part of it, rises my beauty, draws her cloak about her polished shoulders, and mixing with the crowd passes away from these pages forever.

OUR LAST OFFERING[1]

ON THE ASSASSINATION OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN

If I had not heard the terrible news, and were inclined to write upon some other topic, I fancy that I should be dimly conscious of a something in the air — a moral miasma tainting the free atmosphere and benumbing the play of brain and fingers. As it is, there is an indefinable magnetism in the grief of twenty millions of people; a strange and new sense of insecurity in those things which we have hitherto looked upon as most secure, which disturbs that mental equipoise most conducive to composition. My pen, accustomed to deal glibly enough with fiction and abstract character, moves feebly, and finally stops still before the terrible reality of this crime which has put a Nation in mourning, and leaves my poor tribute an uninterpreted symbol upon the altar-tomb of a man whose honesty, integrity, and simple faith I most reverenced and respected. It is the cruel fate of the imaginative scribbler, that finding a tongue for fanciful griefs, or the remoter afflictions of others, he is too often denied expression to those real sorrows which touch him more closely.

Abler pens than mine have demonstrated how the rhetoric of chivalry, which expressed itself in the attack on Charles Sumner, found a fitting climax in the assassination of Abraham Lincoln, but as yet I have not seen recorded that which seems to me to be a better illustration of their peculiar logic. Four years ago the Slave Power accepted the usual arbitrament of the ballot-box with seeming faith and sin-

[1] *Californian*, April 22, 1865.

cerity. Their principles were fairly defeated, and they made war on the Nation. Four years later and the remnants of the same power in the North again submitted their principle to a like arbitrament. They were again defeated — and they assassinated the President!

No other public man seems to me to have impressed his originality so strongly upon the people as did Abraham Lincoln. His person and peculiar characteristics were the familiar and common property of the Nation. In his character and physique the broad elements of a Western civilization and topography seem to have been roughly thrown together. The continuity of endless rivers and boundless prairies appeared to be oddly typified in his tall form and large and loosely-jointed limbs, and that uncouth kindliness of exterior which in nature and man sometimes atones for the lack of cultivation. His eloquence and humor partook of the like local and material influences, mixed with that familiar knowledge of men and character which the easy intercourse of the pioneer had fostered, and the whole seasoned with those anecdotes which, like the legendary ballads of early European civilization, constituted the sole literature of the Western settlements. Let me go further and say that, in my humble opinion, he was, as a representative Western man, the representative American. That correct and sometimes narrow New England civilization and its corresponding crisp and dapper style of thought, which for years represented the North in the councils of the Nation, has always seemed to me to be at best an English graft, which, if it has not dwarfed the growth or spoiled the vitality of the original stock, has at least retarded the formation of national character. Nor do I say this with any the less reverence for that Puritan element, and its deep reliance on the familiar presence of God, which I believe has to-day saved this Nation. Yet there has always seemed to me to be a *certain grim, poetic* justice and symbolic meani[redacted]

EARLY CALIFORNIAN SUPERSTITIONS[1]

No one, in looking over the ancient chronicles of California, can fail being struck by the important part which the Devil played in the earlier settlement of the country. Without wishing to detract from his performances during the American occupation, it must be admitted that he passed out of history as an individual, and merged into an abstract principle. In the good old days of Junípero, however, he was distinguished by an active personality and a consistent malevolence. He did not compromise with sanctity as in these degenerate days. He plagued the good fathers sorely, and kept them in hot, or rather holy, water, all the time. His open hostility was a matter of common report. It is true that skeptics assert that the ascetic habits, privations, and lonely vigils of these monkish missionaries prepared them for singular visions and trancelike experiences; that the bleak plains and dense forests, habited only by ravenous beasts, might have easily been transformed into a lurking-place for the Enemy of Souls, and that the misfortunes and trials, common to the pioneer, might have seemed in this instance of special and personal origin.

The metamorphoses of the Fiend were varied and startling. He had made his appearances as a bear on the rocky fastnesses of Mount Diablo. He had assumed the figure of a dissolute whaler seated upon a sand hill near the Mission Dolores, who harpooned belated travelers. He had held high revel at Point Diablo with a phantom boat's crew of Sir Francis Drake. Although most of these transforma-

[1] *Californian*, December 2, 1865.

tions were done with an eye to business, he occasionally unbent himself in pure exuberance of mischief.

It is related that one evening, Juanita, an old woman who dwelt beyond the present city limits, while looking after her poultry, heard the faint chirping of little chickens in the brush beyond the house. Following the sound, she presently saw on the road before her a young brood, apparently just hatched. The old woman called to them, but they fled from her and the grain she cast before them. She followed. In the eagerness of the chase, she quite forgot the lateness of the hour and the distance she was straying, and at last came upon a black misshapen figure sitting in the road, under whose batlike wings the brood quickly nestled. The figure called to her, and offered her one of a number of eggs on which it was sitting. Juanita, who was not lacking in courage or enthusiasm as a poultry fancier, made the sign of the cross, and accepted the present, upon which the figure vanished. The story goes on to say that Juanita placed the egg under a setting hen, who in due time hatched out a fine young Shanghai. As the newcomer waxed in size and strength, he developed extraordinary fighting qualities. In less than a week he killed off the old Señora's poultry, and challenged every cock in the neighborhood. Extending his depredations to the neighboring hen-yards, he was finally killed and eaten by Incarnacion Briones, a luckless Indian. The most singular part of the story is yet to come. It is gravely stated that a few days after eating the mysterious game-cock, Incarnacion startled the worshipers at the Mission Church by flapping his arms and crowing like a cock during high mass, and that, although naturally of a timid and inoffensive disposition, he began to exhibit belligerent symptoms, and after beating furiously one half the population, was finally dispatched by one Dominguez Robles, a valiant soldier at the *Presidio.*

Equally gratuitous but less pleasant in result was the exploit of the Evil One at the Mission of San ——. The circumstance of the event being still fresh in the memories of many native Californians, for certain reasons proper names are omitted from this veracious chronicle. One moonlit evening as a few youthful Señoritas were lounging upon that open colonnade or gallery which is a familiar appurtenance of all Spanish adobe houses, they were startled by the tramping of horses' hoofs. The elder members of the family were visiting the home of a distant neighbor; it was too early for their return, the road was seldom traveled, and the unusual sound naturally excited fear and suspicion. As they looked across the road toward the old Mission Chapel, whose whitewashed gable the moonlight brought out with vivid distinctness, they saw to their infinite horror a tall figure, mounted on a white horse, issue from the heavily barred door and gallop furiously down the road. A moment, and the horse and rider clothed in a mysterious light, were visible; the rushing wind which attended his furious progress fanned their blanched cheeks as he passed, but in the next instant he had disappeared. One of the party avers that she distinctly saw him melt away as he crossed a little brook over which a few planks were laid, and that he never reached the other side, but when or how he disappeared has never been distinctly settled. The popular belief that evil spirits cannot pass over a stream of running water might seem to obtain in this instance, but as the spirit is alleged to have been that of a former ranchero who was a hard drinker, it has been argued with some show of reason that the only stream he could not pass would have been one of whiskey, and that the theory is untenable.

It is said that in opposition to the extension of the domain of the Holy Church, the Devil figured in some of the earlier land grants, but as it is doubtful to what extent superstition has become blended with contemporary history,

I am compelled to pass over certain wild legends connected with the prices paid by some landowners for their property, and the peculiar construction of their title-deeds, to come to a story which, although of comparatively recent origin, seems to possess all the features of the early California legend. The names are, of course, fictitious.

For some time after the American occupation, the lower country was infested with strolling desperadoes, who had hung on the skirts of the war, sustaining themselves by indiscriminate pillage, and who, in the chaotic state of society which followed peace, availed themselves of the fears and weaknesses of the country people. The sparsely settled districts, where the ranches were leagues apart, the lonely roads over which the expressman passed but once a week, afforded these ruffians ample opportunity for lawless outrage.

The rancho of Pedro Feliz was situated in one of those lonely localities; it was a low, one-story adobe, with projecting eaves and galleries. Its occupants at the time of this story consisted of the family, seven in number, and Pachita Gomez, a young Señorita, who was a visitor. Pachita was a good girl and a devout Catholic. She went to mass regularly, to matins and prime, and never forgot her saint's day. Perhaps it was owing to her conscientious fulfillment of her religious duties that her patron saint watched over her with such care — but I anticipate my story. One night Pachita retired early to her bedroom; lighting a consecrated taper before a little crucifix, she opened her missal and began her evening prayer. She had scarcely reached the middle of her first supplicatory sentence before she felt a breath of warm air upon her cheek, and her candle went out. She lighted it again and recommenced her prayer, when the same warm current swept by her cheek and — puff — the candle was blown out a second time. Pachita rose, a little pettishly, from her knees, carefully examined the door and the win-

dow, which was covered with a strip of cotton cloth that served as curtains by night, and, moving her candle and crucifix to another part of the apartment, once more began her devotions. The candle was blown out a third time! Pachita now became alarmed, but, with an inward prayer to her patron saint, she took a vase of holy water, and after sprinkling and purifying the apartment relit her votive taper and again addressed herself to her orisons. Alas for the efficacy of the blessed fluid! a rush of warm air by her cheek, and — puff! — the candle was, for the fourth time, extinguished. There is a limit, however, to human confidence, even in holy water and prayer. Pachita dropped her smoking taper, and hastily wrapping a shawl around her head, rushed from the house. She did not stop to take leave of its inmates. Perhaps she felt that a tenement in which the Devil was so much at home was no place for a virtuous young woman. The night was dark and windy, but still Pachita fled onward. Buoyed up by faith, which seemed to return to her proportionately as she increased her distance from the house, she actually reached, otherwise unassisted, her own house, at least ten miles away. Pachita did not disclose her diabolical experience, but assigned as a reason for her sudden departure the presence of two rough-looking and mysterious strangers, who had claimed her friend's hospitality for the night. A few days passed, and the returning courier from San Luis Obispo brought fearful news. A traveler, passing by on the morning after Pachita's midnight flight, found the door of the house open, and entering, discovered the lifeless bodies of the murdered family. The house had been pillaged and stripped, and the mysterious strangers had fled.

What connection there was between the evil spirit who blew out Pachita's taper and the material villains who *achieved* the massacre, cannot be distinctly ascertained. *There are skeptics* who, in the face of these notorious facts,

sneer at the experience of the young girl as illusive and fabulous. But as these heretical losels go even so far as to disbelieve in the existence of the Devil altogether, their opinions can weigh but little in comparison to the convictions of consistent Catholics.

POPULAR BIOGRAPHIES[1]

SELF-MADE MEN OF OUR DAY

NO. 1. SYLVESTER JAYHAWK

THE birth and parentage of the subject of our sketch is involved in some obscurity. If we may ask for Homer some credit, from the fact that five cities claimed the honor of his birthplace, a decent respect is due to our hero, whose parentage is alleged to have been divided among as many individuals. The name of "Jayhawk" cannot be traced beyond the present possessor, but, as the peculiar and arduous nature of his putative father's pursuit often rendered an *alias* necessary, this fact should not militate against the antiquity of the family. It is believed that, in conformity with an aboriginal custom, the title of "Jayhawk" might have been bestowed on our hero in recognition of certain accipitrine qualities which he possessed in common with that energetic but ingenious fowl.

Of his early boyhood we know but little. That it was entirely devoid of interest, or of a prophetic nature, we have every reason to believe. "I disremember," said Mr. Jayhawk, in conversation with a high county official a few days previous to his decease, — "I disremember much before I shot a nigger. It was in Missouri, when I was about fourteen. I had no call to kill him in partikler," he repeated, thoughtfully; "he was worth more 'n three hundred dollars, and the old man kinder fancied him." The tender and regretful manner in which Mr. Jayhawk was accustomed to allude

[1] *Californian*, May 12, 1866.

to this act of boyish folly furnishes us a convincing proof of that cautious judgment and economical application of power which distinguished him in after years. He had "no call" to kill this helpless African; his older and more critical judgment, looking back upon an active and not altogether useless life, saw much to regret in this gratuitous and reckless waste of destructive energy. How many of us have been guilty of committing some indiscretion for which we had "no call"; how few of us have had the sincerity to regret it as frankly and openly as the truthful Jayhawk.

We follow young Sylvester from his paternal home to the State of Kansas. With no other property than a knife and pistol, he early faced the cold world and began his career. Even the horse he rode was not his own, but borrowed permanently from a neighbor. An incident of his departure, which he was fond of relating, beautifully illustrates the depths of maternal affection, and the prophetic promptings of a mother's heart. "As I rode away, the old woman heaved arter me what I reckoned was a rock. I picked it up and found it was a paper parsil. That 'ere parsil I have kept to this day." On being interrogated as to its contents, Mr. Jayhawk, with that quaint humor which was peculiar to him, would reply, "It war n't a Bible. It was an old deck of the old man's — the identical deck of keerds with which he won Sam Handy's colt and niggers." Some commentators have looked upon this act of the maternal Jayhawk as ill-advised and perhaps indiscreet. But who shall fathom the mysterious logic of a mother's heart? Perhaps some instinctive premonition of his future occupation — perhaps the mere desire to gratify a beloved son — determined this gift. It is certain that Sylvester never forgot it, and when, returning a few years later in his professional capacity, he burned up the family homestead and both of his parents, he seems to have experienced some regret on giving

at the remains of Mrs. Jayhawk. "She was always good to me," he remarked to a reverend gentleman with whom he conversed some days before his death, "and we found no money on her. I could n't help thinking about her giving me them keerds, and how foolish it was in me to have forgotten that she kept her money in an old stocking."

In Kansas, our hero seems to have taken a partner in the prosecution of his profession, and to have connected himself with the celebrated Colonel McSnaffle. But the self-reliant disposition and independent character of Jayhawk could not long brook the alliance. In an address to a committee of the citizens of Lawrence, who waited upon him beyond the confines of the town, Sylvester alluded to the circumstances of his separation from Colonel McSnaffle. "When we found we could n't get along together, we agreed to divide our money and separate. I counted out three hundred dollars apiece, and divided the weapons. McSnaffle wanted to give me five hundred, and take the weapons himself. But," says Mr. Jayhawk, with playful irony, "I did n't see it. We then shook hands and parted like men, each man a-walking backwards until he was out of rifle-shot. Being in a hurry, I kinder forgot myself and turned my back too soon, and when I faced round again, he had me covered! He was a mighty smart man," he added, in a tone not entirely free from emotion; "and when I see that, I kinder felt sorry we had separated." Mr. Jayhawk seldom spoke of McSnaffle save in the highest terms, and cheerfully bore evidence — on behalf of the State — in regard to McSnaffle's professional zeal and character.

But it was in California that Sylvester found a fitting theatre for the exercise of his talent, and his career may be said to have begun with his entry into this State. His advent was modest, and free from display or ostentation. The removal of several employees of the Overland Mail Company

along the line, the quiet absorption of valuable mail-matter, the permanent withdrawal of stock from the different stations alone marked his progress. Talent of this high order at once commanded respect; he was retained by the Overland Company as one of their chief overseers; the unnecessary and irregular shedding of blood was in a measure checked, and an authoritative and systematized rule of slaughter substituted for wild and sporadic bloodshed. "It isn't as lively as it used to be," Mr. Jayhawk remarked to an intelligent traveler. "I killed ten men the first year I came to the Rocky Ridge station; but there's a kind o' falling off in sport." Later, during a temporary sojourn in Virginia City, he was enabled to prosecute his profession with less restraint. Here he fell a victim to an exalted but misguided ambition. "I had killed twenty-nine men up to the fall of 1860," he writes; "I wanted to finish the year with an even number. So I killed a man keerlessly and without forethought." This thoughtless act cost Mr. Jayhawk his life. A brilliant future was destroyed in a moment of unguarded enthusiasm.

From a portrait in the possession of a distinguished official of Nevada, Mr. Jayhawk seems to have been of middle height. His presence would have been more imposing had his person exhibited the usual quantity of organs and members which the conventionalities of society seem to require. His one eye, in its depth and lustre, seemed to rebuke the popular prejudice which leaned in favor of two. Another portrait in the possession of the Chief of Police of San Francisco, though taken anterior to the Nevada picture, exhibits a much older man, and one whose hair is of entirely different color. It is a singular instance of the difficulty with which facts in regard to prominent men are obtained, that the same number of fingers do not exist in any two portraits of Mr. Jayhawk. In one we find the nose entirely absent. The expression of our hero's face, though not

was mild and pleasing; the loss of his upper lip in a prize-fight on the banks of the Carson led to the frequent and cheerful exhibition of his front teeth, and produced an open and not unpleasant breadth of feature. Mr. Jayhawk, though he never married, left a large family to mourn his loss.

STAGE-COACH CONVERSATIONS [1]

SCENE — a stage-coach *en route* to a California watering-place. Driver, expressman, passengers, etc. A gloomy silence has prevailed for ten minutes, during which time a palpable dust pours into the windows. Passengers perspire.

Agricultural Passenger (looking at view, and addressing nobody in particular). "Them 's fine oats."

His next neighbor (finding the other passengers glancing toward him, and feeling painfully conscious that his position makes him in some way responsible for reprehensible conduct of A. P., but knowing nothing about grain), feebly, "Yes."

A gloomy silence, broken by Agricultural Passenger (who has been encouraged to rashness by this attention). "Too much baird [beard] on that barley, though."

His Next Neighbor (wishes he had said nothing, but finding the other passengers looking at him for an answer, puts on a critical expression). "I should say so — rather!"

Elderly Rustic Female (with round basket containing a suspicious napkin), vivaciously, to His Next Neighbor, "Ranchin' out this way?"

His Next Neighbor (who is really a dry-goods clerk, but feels that he has somehow lost caste with the other passengers by being identified with Agricultural Man), sharply, "No, ma'am!"

Interval of five minutes. Passengers stare hard out of the windows, and affect to be intensely interested in nothing. Dust silently pours in and powders them. Perspiration.

Elderly Female (who has been revolving His Next Neigh-

[1] *Californian*, May 26, 1866.

bor's answer, and is dimly conscious of having made some mistake), soothingly, "Daguerreotypin'?"

Passenger in linen duster and passenger in straw hat both smile, but, detecting each other, repudiate the sympathy, and frown out of their respective windows. Stage crosses a bridge.

Father of Family (confidentially to two grown-up daughters). "Did you notice the peculiarly hollow sound of the horses' hoofs on that bridge?"

Agricultural Passenger (seeing a chance to put in his oar), "Rotton timbers; cave in some day!"

Father of Family (sternly oblivious of A. P.). "It reminds me of a line in the classics."

Daughters (together). "Yes?"

Father of Family (begins amid a general silence). "*Quaduedante putrem* — no — *petrum* — no — bless my soul" (finds he's forgotten it, but makes a wild dash to a conclusion) — "*quatit ungula campum.*"

Passengers endeavor to look as if they understood it. Gent in corner smiles, and pulls his hat over his eyes. Gent in white choker audibly repeats the quotation correctly. Father of Family resolves never to quote again in mixed company. Agricultural Passenger sets him down as a foreigner.

Pretty Girl (to her young man). "What's that he's saying?"

Young Man (not wishing to commit himself). "Something from Homer."

Sharp Young Lady (confidant of Pretty Girl, and a little vexed at somebody's want of attention). "But Homer was a Greek Poet, and I've seen that line in the Latin grammar."

The other passengers try to look as if they had seen it in the Latin grammar, too, and glance superciliously at Father of Family. F. of F. wishes he had n't said anything. Stage *reaches top of hill* and comes in view of ocean.

Bride (to Bridegroom in back seat, on wedding trip). "How lovely the ocean looks!"

Bridegroom (who wishes to show that he can quote also, murmurs in an undertone as if to himself). "Break — break [stage commences to go downhill, and careens frightfully] — Break."

Elderly Rustic Female (who doesn't recognize Tennyson, but is "timersom"). "You don't think there is any danger of breakin' down, do you?"

Bridegroom: —

"On thy dark gray crags, O sea."

Stage clatters so frightfully that Bridegroom is obliged to raise his voice: —

"And I would that my soul could utter
The thoughts that arise in me."

Bridegroom (to himself, finding that the stage has suddenly come to level ground, and that he has delivered the concluding lines in a stentorian voice which has attracted every eye to him). "D —— n it."

Outside Passenger (confidentially, to expressman). "Drunk!"

Dead silence. Several passengers (to each other). "How far is it yet?"

General depression.

Agricultural Passenger (deliberately to His Next Neighbor, settling himself in a comfortable position). "In the fall of '49 —"

His Next Neighbor (to expressman, nervously). "How far did you say?"

Driver (suddenly). "Mugginsville! Change Horses!"

THE PIONEERS OF "FORTY-NINE"[1]

I AM not familiar with the details of the Roman occupation of Britain — my memory being under obligations to the opera of Norma for freshening on that point — but I doubt not that a society of British Pioneers was early formed by the invaders. That they knocked down a few of the old Druid temples and glorified themselves; that the morning paper alluded to the breaking-up of a rotten old galley as "another landmark gone," no one familiar with high Roman civilization and the manners of that imperious race can for a moment doubt. That they made a distinction between the different dates of their galleys' arrival, awarding a higher honor to the Ninth Legion than the Tenth seems equally probable. No doubt the immediate descendants of Adams, the original mutineer, regard themselves as better than the other Pitcairn's Islanders. The thrilling question, therefore, whether the California Pioneers, who came in the fall of 1849 shall admit to equal privileges the people who came in the spring of 1850, is no new one. For my part, I — albeit not a Pioneer — incline to the views of the aristocrats of "Forty-nine." If we have not the distinction of priority, what have we? The mere fact of one's coming to California, although doubtless commendable, is still too common for extra distinction. As the Pioneers, unlike the Puritans of New England, the Huguenots of South Carolina, the Cavaliers of Virginia, or even the Mormons of Salt Lake, did not emigrate for conscience' sake, but purely from pecuniary motives, what claim have they for distinction if that of priority be left out? If we are to have an aristocracy,

[1] *Overland Monthly*, August, 1868.

this seems to have about as sensible a foundation as most of those found in a Heralds' College. To be proud of one's ancestor because he arrived in San Francisco on the last day of December, 1849, is not a bit more ridiculous than to honor him because he came to England after the battle of Hastings. The passenger list of the steamer California, as a passport to celebrity, is only a trifle more snobbish than the roll of Battle Abbey. The origin of some of the oldest families of England, and what will be some of the oldest of California, are equally ignoble. Let us by all means cling to the distinction of "Forty-nine." It is true that it may not have been a poetical era; it is true that it may not have been a heroic era; it may have been a hard, ugly, unwashed, vulgar, and lawless era; but of such are heroes and aristocracies born. Three hundred years, and what a glamour shall hang about it! How the painters shall limn and the poets sing these picturesque vagabonds of "Forty-nine"; how romantic shall become the red shirts, how heroic the high boots of the Pioneers! What fancy-dress balls shall be given then, and how the morning journals shall tell of Mr. F.'s distinguished appearance as a "Pioneer of 'Forty-nine.'" A thousand years, and a new Virgil sings the American Æneid with the episode of Jason and the California golden fleece, and the historians tell us it is a myth! Laugh, my Pioneer friends, but your great-great-great-great-grandchildren shall weep reverential tears. History, as was said of martyrdom, is "mean in the making," but how heroic it becomes in the perspective of five centuries! How we once loved Sir John Holland and Sir Reginald De Roye. And yet we know now that they were unpleasant company at table. Did the suspicion ever cross our minds that the Knights Templar seldom changed their linen, and that the knights-errant must have smelt of the horse, horsey?

Though there may not be much that is picturesque or heroic in the Pioneers of "Forty-nine," still I am far from

discouraging anything that in our too skeptical and material civilization points to reverence of the past. Perhaps it would be well if the bones of those old Pioneers who have been dust these fifteen years were collected from Yerba Buena Park and not disseminated gratuitously over the city. And I cannot help thinking that there are some traditions of the soil — some few guideboards to older history — that are worthy of respect. Besides the Spanish archives of California — consulted only for gain and too often interpreted by fraud — we have the old Missions — those quaintly illuminated Missals of the Holy Church. Here, too, are those rude combinations of the bucolic and warlike expression of a past age — the Presidios. One — a few miles from the plaza of San Francisco — was the scene of as sweet and as sad a love-story as ever brought the tear of sensibility to the eye of beauty. Is it possible you do not remember it?

Doña Concepción Arguello was the commandante's daughter. She was young, and the century was young, when Von Resanoff, the Russian diplomat, came to the Presidio to treat with the commander in amity and alliance. But the sensitive diplomat began by falling in love with Doña Concepción and this complicated affairs, and Von Resanoff, being of the Greek Church, found that his master the Czar must ratify both alliances. So he bade adieu to the weeping Concepción, and sailed away to Russia to get his master's permission to be happy. He broke his neck, and did not return!

What do young ladies do in such circumstances? In novels they pine away and die; sometimes they take that last desperate revenge of womanhood — marry somebody else and make him unpleasantly conscious of their sacrifice. In poetry they follow the missing lover, like that beautiful but all too ghostlike Evangeline. But here was a young lady of flesh and blood, if you please, who had read little romance and certainly had no model. She did not become delirious, *and beat the wall,* like Haidee, "with thin, wan fingers."

She did not dress herself in male attire and wander away she did not walk the shore at unseemly hours, *décolleté* and with hair flying. She waited. She had that sublime virtue, patience, which the gods give to these feeble creatures — despite all that your romancers say. She did not refuse her victuals. Her little white teeth were not unfamiliar with the *tortilla*, and she still dressed becomingly and looked after the charms that Von Resanoff admired. Sir George Simson saw her in '42, and she was still fine-looking. "She took," says the chronicle, "the habit but *not* the vows of a nun, and ministered to the sick." Poor Concepción! that one exception was the piteous evidence of a lifelong faith.

Did she suffer? I think she did, in a quiet way, as most women suffer. Your true heroine goes about her round of household duties, outwardly calm. I think this brave little heart trembled of nights when the wind moaned around the white walls of the Presidio, and the rain splashed drearily in the courtyard. I think those honest eyes dilated when the solitary trader swept into the gate, and filled with moisture when she found it brought him not. There are nights and days, too, in this blissful climate that are as irritating to old heart-sores as they are to mucous membranes. In that chill hour of twilight when the Angelus rings, one may shudder to think of Concepción.

It is said she did not fairly know her lover's fate until Sir George Simson told her. I doubt it. Whether revealed to her inner consciousness or gathered from the lips of some dying sailor at whose side she ministered, she knew it, and kept it to herself as part of the burden. And now she has followed her lover, and the treaty of alliance she was to grace has been made by other hands. But are not these things told in the chronicles of De Nofras and Simson, and in the pages of Randolph and Tuthill?

severe Californian earthquakes to the contrary notwithstanding. This is satisfying to the commercial mind, which, of course, deprecates panic. But if the commercial mind, consistent with its statements, still continue to occupy badly built structures on "made ground," commerce will suffer. It is only a question of time. The commercial statement is useful in keeping up our credit abroad; but one of the cheap photographs of the ruins in San Francisco and San Leandro, taken by the sun who looked, if possible, even more calmly on the whole disaster than the entire Chamber of Commerce — one of these photographs in an Eastern city will, it is to be feared, outweigh the commercial circular, although signed by the most influential men.

The earthquake had no lesson that has not been taught before. It is one of the feeble egotisms of our nature — from which Californians are not exempt — to look upon this class of phenomena as freighted with a peculiar mission for our benefit — it may be the price of flour, the importance of piling, the necessity of a new religion. It is surprising how little we know of the earth we inhabit. Perhaps hereafter we in California will be more respectful of the calm men of science who studied the physique of our country without immediate reference to its mineralogical value. We may yet regret that we snubbed the State Geological Survey because it was impractical. There was something intensely practical in the awful presence in which we stood that morning — the presence, whose record, written in scar and cliff, these men had patiently transcribed. We know little else. It need not frighten us to accept the truth fairly. We are not relieved of the responsibilities of duty, because our lot is cast in an earthquake country, nor shall we lose the rare advantages it offers us, in obedience to the great laws of Compensation. We pay for our rare immunities in *some such* currency. But it will not help us if we *frantically deny the Law,* and challenge its power.

CHARLES DICKENS

The following editorial was hurriedly written by Bret Harte on the day that the news of the death of Dickens reached him. He was, at this time, camping out in the California foothills. The last sheets of the issue of the *Overland Monthly*, for July, 1870, already edited by him, were going to press. He telegraphed to San Francisco to delay the publication, and the next morning this editorial, accompanied by his well-known poem, "Dickens in Camp," was forwarded.

Of one who dealt so simply and directly with his reader's feelings as Charles Dickens, it is perhaps fit that little should be said that is not simple and direct. In that sense of personal bereavement which the English-reading world feels at his death, there is not so much the thought of what we should say of him, as what he has said of us; not how we should describe his Art, but how he has depicted our Nature. And it is to be feared that the world is so constituted that it will turn from finely written eulogies to "David Copperfield," or the "Old Curiosity Shop," to indulge its pathos and renew its love. The best that the best of us could say of him could not give this real man the immortality conferred by his own pen upon some of his humblest creations.

Indeed, it may be said of his power that no other writer, living or dead, ever transfused fiction with so much vitality. In the late cartoon by Mr. Eytinge, where "Mr. Pickwick" reviews the characters of which he was the illustrious predecessor,—a cartoon which held a pathetic prophecy beneath its original design,—there is no finer compliment can be made to the greater artist than that the lesser one could reproduce them with the fidelity of living portraits. "Dick Swiveler," "Captain Cuttle," "Mr. Dombey," "Micawber"—*surely* these are not puppets, pulled by a

hand that has lost its cunning in death, but living acquaintances, who have merely survived their introducer.

Of his humor, it may be said that for thirty years the world has accepted it as its own — as the articulate voicing of some sense of fun that was not so much Mr. Dickens's as common property. A humor so large that it was not restricted to the eccentricity of animate being, but found fun in inanimate objects — in drawers "that had to be opened with a knife, like an oyster," in door-handles that "looked as if they wanted to be wound up," in well-like parlors "where the visitor represented the bucket"; a humor that was a delightful and innocent pantheism, and, as in "Martin Chuzzlewit," invested even the wind with jocular sympathies. The reader has but to look back to the limitations of the humorists of a preceding age to appreciate what the world gained thirty years ago in the wonderful spontaneity of Mr. Dickens, and has not entirely lost now. For its influence has been since then steadily felt in literature — not entirely in the way of imitation, but in the recognition that humor is nearly akin to human sympathy and love.

Of his poetry perhaps the best that can be said is that he taught us by his prose how we could do without it; not only through the delicate beauty of his conceptions, but in the adaptation of his style to his thought, and the musical procession of his sentences. Not only is the character of "Paul Dombey" purely poetical, but the relations of surrounding objects become so, in the clock that talks to him, the sea that whispers to him, the golden water that dances on the wall. And so strongly is this indicated in the death of "Little Nell," that not only are the surroundings brought into actual sympathy with her fate, but at the last the very diction falters, and trembles on the verge of blank verse. This may not be poetry of the highest order, so much as it is *perhaps the highest* order of prose — but it is well to remember *that it* began with Charles Dickens.

Of his humanity, it is pleasant now to think. He was an optimist, without the disadvantage of being also a philosopher. So tender were his judgments and so poetic his experience that the villains of his art were his weakest creations. Not only in the more obvious philanthropic consecration of his stories, — the exposition of some public abuse, or the portrayal of some social wrong, — but in his tender and human pictures of classes on whom the world hitherto had bestowed but scant sentiment, was he truly great. He brought the poor nearer to our hearts. He had an English fondness for the Hearth — making it the theme of one of his sweetest idyls — and the simple joys of the domestic fireside found no finer poet. No one before him wrote so tenderly of childhood, for no one before him carried into the wisdom of maturity an enthusiasm so youthful — a faith so boy-like. In his practical relations with the public life around him, he was a reformer without fanaticism, a philanthropist without cant. Himself an offspring of the public press, he stood nearer in sympathy with its best expression than any other literary man.

And all that is mortal of him, of whom this may be fairly said, lies in Westminster Abbey. Around him presses the precious dust of the good and wise — men who were great in great things, who conferred fame upon their island and large benefits upon mankind — but none who, in their day and time, were mourned more widely than he. For his grave is in every heart, and his epitaph on every hearthstone.

LATER PROSE

STORIES

AN AMERICAN HAROUN AL-RASCHID

It was night at the Soldiers' Home. Mr. President was tired, Mr. President was weary, Mr. President was bewildered and bored. As he tossed upon his bed, a thousand tangled recollections of that day's Executive business — of office-giving, of proclamations, of suggestions, of advice, of policy — knotted themselves in his brain. "If Civil Service Reform," he murmured vaguely, "were carried out at Martinsburg, and Resumption introduced in the National Republican Convention, so that no office-holder could pursue Mexican raiders into their own territory except upon the recognition of Chief Joseph by the Diaz Government, why —" here he fell into an uneasy slumber. All was quiet in the mansion and the surrounding umbrage, save for the occasional amatory howl of some old soldier, and the coy, yet playful, "Who dat dar, now? Leff me go, dar," of a passing female Ethiop.

The noise awoke Mr. President. "Old soldiers — ah, my veteran friends!" — he mused for a moment; "and yet I mind me now that in my boyhood days the term was used to define a wad of the Nicotian leaf from which the juice had been expressed. Strange that the epithet should have been borrowed from the just and honored appellation given to aged and retired defenders of the Republic. But, bless me! how much that sentence sounds like Evarts! I really am catching his style. Why, d——n it all! Ah, that oath, too, comes from an unhallowed intimacy with John Sherman. I must stop this and go to sleep."

He would have turned over and gone to sleep, but his attention was at this moment arrested by a singular light in

the corner of his bedchamber, which kept increasing in brilliancy, while the air was filled with a strange perfume of Oriental spices and attar of rose. Gradually a figure was outlined darkly below this brilliancy, which Mr. President now perceived came from an enormous diamond aigrette in its turban. The stranger was clothed in Oriental garb, and his deep dark eyes and glossy black beard betrayed his Persian origin. He made a profound salaam to the President, and in a low but musical voice said: —

"I am Haroun al-Raschid."

"From Ohio?" asked the President, with some animation. "I knew an H. L. Richards of Warren."

"From Persia," responded the stranger.

"Then I must refer you to the State Department. Mr. Evarts takes care — "

"My business is with *you*," replied the stranger quietly.

"But, my dear sir, there are no vacancies now, and by the rules of Civil Service Reform the appointment clerk must refer — "

"Son of a Giaour! I seek no office!"

The President rose on his elbow. "May I trouble you to repeat that epithet?"

"Son of a Giaour!"

"Well, that will do. Go on!" And the President, as he lay down again, said, "I thought you said something else."

"I am here to do thee a service, infidel though thou art! Thou dost not remember me, and yet I once sat the wise yet despotic ruler of a throne that upheld the gorgeous East. Look at me! I was 'Commander of the Faithful.'"

"I regret to say," said the President, "that any Republican Political Organization, under whatever name, renders its chairman unfit to hold office."

"*Son of Shitan*, hear me!"

"*Which?*" said the President.

"Son of Shitan, listen! Marshalla! Thou *shalt* hear me! To-morrow thou goest with thy prime minister to visit thy people, to observe and note the conduct of thy servants in office, to repair abuses, to punish fraud, to right the oppressed."

"That is my little game — Excuse me," added the President, hastily, as he muttered to himself, "I really must drop Devens; his slang will ruin me yet."

"Yes, but *how* goest thou, O Rutherford, the Mighty? Why, with caravans and attendants, with Lightning, the swift-footed, before thee, to announce thy coming; with drums and cymbals, with shoutings and banquets."

"If the loyalty and affection of a free people chooses to express itself in this manner," said the President, hiding his blushing face beneath the coverlid, "it were discourteous to rebuke — "

"But what seest thou of thy people? What knowest thou of thy slaves and servants who do thy bidding? Is not the house made ready against thy coming? Are not the crippled and the maimed put out of thy sight? Is not the wine-jar hidden, and the bag of dates refilled? What knowest thou of thy meanest slave, save through the report of his master, who haply is but fit to take his place? Does corruption invite thee to view its black deformity? Do the jackasses that defile the graves of the just caper and dance in thy presence? Bismillah!"

"Go slow, old man; go slow!" The President again checked himself, and muttered that he really must cut McCrary.

"I was once, O Frank — "

"Rutherford! Rutherford B.," suggestingly interrupted the President.

"I was once, O Frank, like unto thee. I was once ruler of an empire that I knew not — of a people that I saw not. I was as a dog in the hands of my slaves, doing but their

bidding, seeing with their eyes, hearing with their ears. One night I bethought me to walk the streets of my capital, disguised as a simple merchant, accompanied only by my faithful Mesrour. Thou knowest the story. Thou remememberest the iniquities I discovered, the wrongs I redressed."

"Seems to me I do remember hearing the boys say something about it. Well, that was your policy — I mean your idea of things."

"It was my custom; it became my glory. I was a mighty Caliph."

"Well, I'll speak of it in Cabinet meeting to-morrow."

"Thou wilt not. Thou wilt not go alone. Unfortunate man, thou hast not even a Mesrour thou canst trust!"

"I might take Fred Douglass with me," pondered the President; "he'd do as to color, and his functions are pretty much the same."

"Thou wilt go alone! Thou wilt shave thy head, — thy beard, I mean, — and in the disguise of a Western trader thou wilt visit thy officers and cadis, thy slaves and thy people. Thou wilt hearken to their speech, observe their acts, and wisdom and a second term may descend on thee. Farewell. May the Prophet console thee!"

The light of his diamond aigrette began to fade, and he himself to resolve into thin air.

"Oh, I say! See here, Richards, — one question more." But he had gone.

"I wonder if it could have been the seltzer," muttered the President, as he turned over and went to sleep.

The sun was shining brightly when he awoke the next morning. But the Executive face was set with a certain resolution, and, in putting on the Executive shirt, an occasional muttered reference to the condition of Executive *buttons escaped* his tightly drawn lips. Then he proceeded *to his dressing-table*, and, with a firm hand, shaved off that

blond beard, which had been one of his most distinguishing characteristics. Then from a secluded closet in the attic he procured a pair of trousers left by the ex-President, a waistcoat belonging to the lamented Lincoln, and a blue coat with brass buttons, originally the property of the late James Buchanan. The natural wear and tear of these articles had been repaired by the sartorial art of the late Andrew Johnson. A straw hat, inadvertently left by the Secretary of State, completed his disguise. "Four dynasties look down upon me," said the President with a smile, as he surveyed himself in the glass; but he reflected, "I must keep that, and say it to Evarts. At present he monopolizes all the *mots*."

After inditing a few lines to his wife and private secretary, saying that profound affairs of State took him for a while beyond the reach of newspaper reporters, he descended the back stairs and speedily found himself free and unnoticed. He took the nearest horse-car to the Executive Mansion and stopped to look up at the great white edifice he had occupied, and thought it was strange that it had never seemed so imposing before. Suddenly a voice rang in his ears: —

"Get off them flower-beds, you d——d old buckeye, afore I bust your head."

For an instant the President forgot his *incognito*. "Do you know whom you address?" he said stiffly.

"Do I? I reckon! You 's one of them Ohio chaps, snoopin' around for an app'intment. Your father 's second cousin to Mr. Hayes's grandfather, ain't he? You waz the first man that nominated Hayes for Guv'ner, ain't ye? Do I know yer? Do I know that rig? Look at that hat! — them pants! O git, will you!"

"Perhaps," thought the President, as he moved slowly away, "my garments are, to some degree, unpopular. Let me *see, the lesson* Richards would draw from this

promulgation of an order requiring all Government employees to wear the clothes of their predecessors. Good! I 'll sound Schurz regarding it. It will promote economy and render him and Evarts less remarkable! Let me see," he added, as he reached Pennsylvania Avenue and turned toward the huge derricks on the State Department. "It can't be too early for Evarts. I guess I 'll go there first."

A colored messenger doubtfully received the card tendered by the President, on which he had written the name of Joshua Snively, of Ashtabula. "I think the Secretary 's engaged all day," he said, examining the person and the card of the Executive. "He left word he can see nobody but princes and kings, and members of Congress to-day."

"I 'll wait," replied the Executive.

He waited four hours in the anteroom. He could n't say that the hours were wasted, for during that time he heard himself and his policy discussed in whispers by people who had eaten of his bread, received his favor, and solicited his support. Perhaps it was his quiet manner, perhaps it was some kindliness in the heart of the messenger that caused him to suggest to the President that he might if he wished have an interview with the First Assistant Secretary.

"Certainly," thought the President. "He is right, I should begin with Seward."

As he opened the door a bright, affable, middle-aged man sprang to his feet and grasped the hand of the President warmly. "My dear Mr. Snively, pray be seated. You will find that chair more comfortable."

"Really," said the President to himself, as he sank into a luxuriant armchair, "this *is* civil service reform. My business," began the President aloud, "with you is simply —"

"One moment," interrupted the Assistant Secretary, *with a cautious* but deprecatory uplifting of his hand; "*believe me, dear sir,* you have *no* business with the Depart-

ment. You only *think* you have. In the course of my long connection with this Department I have found many gentlemen of culture and ability who had believed or conceived that they had business with us. They had *not*. Dear sir, I assure you they had not. In the course of four or five years, at least, they were convinced they had not. It is to save you this unnecessary annoyance that I speak thus frankly."

He smiled so affably and genially, looked so sympathetically and kindly, that the President was dumb. At last he ventured to say: —

"But I think, Mr. Seward —"

"Pardon me. You only *think* you think. Nobody, as a rule, thinks in this Department. We talk, it is true. You talk, I talk, they talk. He, she, and it talks. But I do not think, thou dost not think, they do not think."

"Believe me, my dear sir," said the Assistant Secretary, rising suddenly and grasping both hands of the Executive with an excess of courtesy, "you will return in the course of a few months to your pleasant home in Ashtabula County satisfied, nay convinced, that you never had any business with the State Department. Nay, sir," as the President struggled to speak, "do not thank me, it is simply my duty. God bless you. Farewell!"

And before the President could catch his breath he was ushered into the corridor. For an instant the hot Ohio blood mantled his cheek, and then a thought struck him. He slipped back into the anteroom and in his own well-known chirography wrote over the Snively card the mandate: "Give him an audience. R. B. Hayes."

The messenger took the card, glanced at the writing, rushed frantically into the office of the Secretary, returned, knocked over two Congressmen and a Senator in his haste, and half-led, half-dragged the President into the presence of the Secretary.

In the dim light of the room all the President could see was the familiar Ciceronian profile of his prime minister. The rest of his body was draped in shadow.

The President sat down in the chair indicated by the finger of the Secretary. The Secretary looked thoughtfully out of the window, and after a first half-glance at the President took no further personal notice of him.

In the excitement of his entrance the President had forgotten his alleged business. He was obliged hastily to invent something.

"Some years ago, Mr. Secretary," he began, "I lost an aged but endeared relative in the island of Formosa. My business with you is to procure an order for the removal of her bones to the lonely graveyard of her relatives."

"What island?" said Mr. Evarts, apparently addressing the unfinished shaft of the Washington Monument.

"Formosa."

"I see — in the North Atlantic," said the Secretary nodding his head.

"Pardon me — in the South Pacific," corrected the President, who was proud of his geography.

"In the Atlantic *and* Pacific," said Mr. Evarts gravely. "Formosa is from the Latin *formes*, an Ant, so called from the ravages of that insect. Hence the term Ant-illes applied to the West Indian group — being evidently a corruption of Ant-Hillys."

"But I suppose there is no objection to my getting such an order?" asked the President hastily.

"That remains to be seen. How do you know — how could you identify the bones of your aged relative? Are you prepared," said the Secretary, rising to his feet with sudden severity, and turning upon the Executive as if he were a recalcitrant witness, "are you prepared to put your finger on this bone and say it is the *tibia* of my relative; can you swear to her *spinal* processes; can you, lifting her fleshless

hand, say, 'These are the metacarpal bones I have so often pressed?' You were familiar with her only in the flesh. *Non constat* that these bones are hers originally. No. I should require an attested certificate of that fact."

"But if I get the certificate, will you promise to give me the order?"

"I am not prepared to say yes or no. I might, and I might not. A delicate legal question arises here, which it is my duty to consider. Your grand-aunt probably fell a victim to the peculiar tastes of the Anthropophagi who swarm those islands. At least, for the sake of argument we will admit that at one time your family was edible, and that your relative was — in plain language — *eaten*. Now a nation, at peace with the United States, having, according to their local laws, become seized and possessed of the flesh of your aunt, I am not certain but the entire skeleton may also belong to them. When you get a piece of meat from your butcher you do not part with your rights to the bone. Indeed, I am not certain but an action would lie against the United States in the event of the forcible removal of your relative."

"Then nothing can be done," said the President blankly.

"At present, no! In the course of a few years — in which I need not say no particular loss of property will be entailed upon you — I will look into it. You will file your papers with my clerk."

"But I might appeal to the President."

"I am, for these purposes, the President. Good-morning, sir." And the Secretary took up another card.

"I don't see," said the President to himself, as he heavily descended the stairs, "that I'm doing much in the Persian way of business. I can't bow-string Seward and Evarts, and I don't know that I ought to if I could. I wish I could get hold of some real wrong and injustice."

As he passed a large building on Pennsylvania Avenue

he saw an old man, in shabby attire, sitting patiently on its steps. He remembered to have seen this man every morning as he drove into town, and thought the present a good opportunity to discover his business. "May I ask the name of this building?" said the President kindly.

"It is called the Department of Justice," said the man bitterly. "I suppose because it is built up on the ruins of a fraud — the Freedman's Bank."

"You speak bitterly, my friend. Have you a complaint against it?" said the President encouragingly.

"I 've sat here five-and-twenty years waiting to know whether the Government would protect me from thieves that stole my land. I am poor; my antagonists are rich. I can get no opinion. The case never comes up."

"Have you spoken to the President?" said the Executive softly. "They say he is a kind, just man," he added, with a slight blush.

"What, Hayes, that d——d old fraud? No, sir-ree! Why, he 's in the ring, ag'in' me, too."

"But give me the particulars of your case. I know the President well, and may help you."

The old man rose to his feet, trembling with rage. "You infernal old brass-buttoned lobbyist; you dare to speak to me when I 've spent thousands of dollars on your kind! Git!"

"I wonder," thought the President, as he dodged to avoid the cane of the old man, "if that old Persian ever was knocked over by a cripple in the streets of Bagdad?"

He looked at his watch, and found he had spent six hours at the State Department. He was beginning to be faint from hunger, and he turned into the first restaurant that invited. As he passed the bar he heard his name spoken, and remembering the advice of Haroun, ordered a glass of seltzer, *and* mingled with the crowd before the counter. Some of *the gentlemen* were tipsy; all were loquacious.

"I tell you what, gentlemen, what that Hayes oughter do. He oughter order out 200,000 men and take possession of all them railroads," said one.

"And then he oughter just run them railroads with reg'lar tariff of freights and fares himself, and employ them men at fair wages."

"Yes, but that ain't the kind o' man Hayes is. Why, if he had the *sabe* o' you and me, he 'd jist hev sent enough troops over into Mexico and jist gobbled enough o' that kentry to pay the national debt."

"I tell you, gentlemen, there ain't no statesmanship in the country. Look at the chance we had to get Cuby the other day, along o' that frigate firing into American colors. That Evarts ain't worth shucks."

"I suppose," thought the President wearily, "it 's the proper Persian thing to make a memorandum of these opinions of the people and present them to the Cabinet. But I don't see that I am gaining much."

A little refreshed by his dinner, he made his way to the Interior Department. As he ascended the steps a man passed him hurriedly, as if seeking to enter without observation. Forgetting his *incognito* for a moment, the President called out, "O Schurz?"

The man leaped wildly into the air, shuddered, grimaced, and shouting "No vacancies," disappeared madly down the corridor.

"Poor Carl!" said the President. "Well, I won't disturb him. But why, after all, is he so incensed at office-seekers — he who has sought office all his life?"

Communing thus, the President went from office to office, from bureau to bureau, but always with the same result. There was no complaint, no approbation; the cold indifference of a vast piece of complicated machinery seemed to control the entire building, until an unlooked-for event gave the President an opportunity to exercise his generous, just,

and chivalrous Persian instincts. Passing through the ante room, he saw a very pretty girl drying her wet eyes in the corner. Struck by her grief and her beauty, the President approached her with a mingled fatherly kindness and magisterial condescension, and begged to know the reason of her distress.

"I have just been dismissed from the service," she said, with a heart-broken sob.

"And why, my dear?"

"Because my second cousin is carpenter in the navy yard at Mare Island."

"Have you spoken to the President?"

"The President!" she exclaimed, with a sudden straightening of her pretty brow. "The President — why, it is to give one of his friends from Ohio a place that the Secretary hunted up this relationship! Don't talk to me about Hayes!"

The President pondered. He did remember his application. But here was a chance to be generous and just — and a man could as well be discharged as a woman. And then he could do it romantically, and after the Persian fashion. He could make an appointment to meet her, have her driven to the White House, and then reveal himself in all his power as a wise and humane ruler.

"Listen, I will speak to the President for you," he said, taking her little hand.

"Oh, thank you; you are too kind," she said gratefully, yet looking at him a little curiously.

"Hear me, my dear. To-night at eight o'clock, be at the corner of Ninth and F Streets. A close carriage will be in waiting, and the driver will take you — no matter where, but where possibly your wish may be obtained."

To the President's intense terror, the young woman instantly set up an appalling scream, fell backward in her *chair, and began to* violently kick her heels against the floor.

In an instant the room was filled with clerks of 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th and 16th class, armed with erasers and headed by the tall form of the Secretary himself, brandishing a huge beet from the Agricultural Department.

"There he stands," screamed the indignant girl; "look at him, the old reprobate, the hoary-headed villain!"

"What has he done?" said the Secretary.

"Proposed to me an infamous elopement if he could reinstate me in my place. Wanted to meet me in a carriage after dark, and before all these people, too! Oh, the shameless rascal!"

There was an indignant outcry from the masculine clerks, a titter from the females. Schurz advanced flourishing his dreadful vegetable. The President looked wildly round — there was but one mode of escape, the window! It was desperate, but he took it, and — landed in the middle of his bed.

"The party are waiting for you, Mr. President," said the voice of his secretary at his side.

"Oh," said the President, rubbing his eyes, "I'm coming. I see now. It must have been the seltzer."

THE FIRST MAN

SOME repairs were needed to the engine when the train reached Reno, and while most of the passengers were taking a philosophical view of the delay and making themselves as comfortable as possible in the depot, in walked a native. He was n't a native Indian nor a native grizzly, but a native Nevadian, and he was rigged out in imperial style. He wore a bearskin coat and cap, buckskin leggings and moccasins, and in his belt was a big knife and two revolvers. There was lightning in his eye, destruction in his walk, and as he sauntered up to the red-hot stove and scattered tobacco juice over it, a dozen passengers looked pale with fear. Among the travelers was a car painter from Jersey City, and after surveying the native for a moment, he coolly inquired: —

"Are n't you afraid you 'll fall down and hurt yourself with those weapons?"

"W—what!" gasped the native in astonishment.

"I suppose they sell such outfits as you 've got on at auction out here, don't they?" continued the painter.

"W—what d' ye mean — who are ye?" whispered the native, as he walked around the stove and put on a terrible look.

"My name is Logwood," was the calm reply; "and I mean that if I were you I 'd crawl out of those old duds and put on some decent clothes!"

"Don't talk to me that way, or you won't live a minit!" exclaimed the native as he hopped around. "Why, you homesick coyote. I am Grizzly Dan, the heaviest Indian *fighter in the world.* I was the first white man to scout for

General Crook! I was the first white man in the Black Hills! I was the first white man among the Modocs!"

"I don't believe it," flatly replied the painter. "You look more like the first man down to the dinner table!"

The native drew his knife, put it back again, looked around, and then softly said: —

"Stranger, will ye come over behind the ridge, and shoot and slash until this thing is settled?"

"You bet I will!" replied the man from Jersey, as he rose to his feet. "Just pace right out and I'll follow you!"

Every man in the room jumped to his feet in wild excitement. The native started for the back door, but when he found the car painter at his heels with a six-barreled Colt in his hands, he halted and said: —

"Friend, come to think about it, I don't want to kill you, and have your widow come on me for damages!"

"Go right ahead — I'm not a married man," replied the painter.

"But you've got relatives, and I don't want no lawsuits to bother me just as spring is coming."

"I'm an orphan, without a relative in the world!" shouted the Jerseyite.

"Well, the law would make me bury you, and it would be a week's work to dig a grave at this season of the year. I think I'll break a rib or two for you, smash your nose, gouge out your left eye, and let you go at that!"

"That suits me to a dot," said the painter. "Gentlemen, please stand back, and some of you shut the door to the ladies' room."

"I was the first man to attack a grizzly bear with a bowie-knife," remarked the native as he looked around. "I was the first man to discover silver in Nevada. I made the first scout up Powder River. I was the first man to make *hunting-shirts* out of the skin of Pawnee Indians. I

don't want to hurt this man, as he looks kinder sad and down-hearted, but he must apologize to me."

"I won't do it," cried the painter.

"Gentlemen, I never fight without taking off my coat, and I don't see any man here to hang it on," said the native.

"I'll hold it," shouted a dozen voices in chorus.

"And another thing," softly continued the native, "I never fight in a hot room. I used to do it years ago, but I found it was running me into consumption. I always do my fighting out of doors now."

"I'll go out with you, you old rabbit-killer!" exclaimed the painter, who had his coat off.

"That's another deadly insult, to be wiped out in blood, and I see I must finish you. I never fight around a depot, though. I go out on a prairie, where there is a chance to throw myself."

"Where's your prairie? — lead the way!" howled the crowd.

"It would n't do any good," replied the native, as he leaned against the wall. "I always hold a $10 gold-piece in my mouth when I fight, and I have n't got one to-day — in fact, I'm dead broke."

"Here's a gold-piece!" called a tall man, holding up the metal.

"I'm a thousand times obleeged," mournfully replied the native, shaking his head. "I never go into a fight without putting red paint on my left ear for luck; and I have n't any red paint by me, and there is n't a bit in Reno."

"Are — you — going — to — fight?" demanded the car painter, reaching out for the bearskin cap.

"I took a solemn oath when a boy never to fight without painting my left ear," protested the Indian killer. "You *would* n't want me to go back on my solemn oath, would *you?*"

"You 're a cabbage, a squash, a pumpkin, dressed up in leggings!" contemptuously remarked the car painter, as he put on his coat.

"Yes, he 's a great coward," remarked several others as they turned away.

"I 'll give $10,000 for ten drops of red paint," shrieked the native. "Oh! Why is it that I have no red paint for my ear when there is such a chance to get in and kill?"

A big blacksmith from Illinois took him by the neck and ran him out, and he was seen no more for an hour. Just before the train started, and after all the passengers had taken seats, the "first man" was seen on the platform. He had another bowie knife, and had also put a tomahawk in his belt. There was red paint on his left ear, his eyes rolled, and in a terrible voice he called out: —

"Where is that man Logwood? Let him come out here and meet his doom!"

"Is that you? Count me in!" replied the car painter, as he opened a window. He rushed for the door, leaped down, and was pulling off his overcoat again, when the native began to retreat, calling out: —

"I 'll get my hair cut and be back in seventeen seconds. I never fight with long hair. I promised my dying mother not to."

When the train rolled away, he was seen flourishing his tomahawk around his head in the wildest manner.

the latter place very shortly after, for the pursuer was the constable of Challenge Hill; and for constables and all officers of the law the Colonel possessed hatred of unspeakable intensity.

On galloped the Colonel, following the stage road, which threaded the old mining-camps on Duck Creek; but suddenly he turned abruptly out of the road and urged his horse through the young pines and bushes, which grew thickly by the road, while the constable galloped rapidly on to the next camp.

There seemed to be no path through the thicket into which the Colonel had turned, but Tipsie waled between the trees and shrubs as if they were the familiar objects of her own stable-yard. Suddenly a voice from the bushes shouted: —

"What 's up? "

"Business — that 's what," replied the Colonel.

"It 's time," replied the voice; and its owner — a bearded six-footer — emerged from the bushes, and stroked Tipsie's nose with the freedom of an old acquaintance. "We ain't had a nip since last night, and thar ain't a cracker or a handful of flour in the shanty. The old gal go back on yer?"

"Yes," replied the Colonel ruefully; "lost every blarsted race. 'T was n't her fault — bless her — she done her level best. Ev'rybody to home?"

"You bet," said the man. "All been a-prayin' for yer to turn up with the rocks, an' somethin' with more color than spring water. Come on."

The man led the way, and Tipsie and the Colonel followed, and the trio suddenly found themselves before a small log hut, but in front of which sat three solemn, disconsolate individuals, who looked appealingly to the Colonel.

"*Mac* 'll tell yer how 't was, fellers," said the Colonel *meekly*, "*while I* picket the mare."

The Colonel was absent but a very few moments, but when he returned each of the four was attired in pistols and knife, while Mac was distributing some dominos, made from a rather dirty flour-bag.

"'T ain't so late ez all that, is it?" inquired the Colonel.

"Better be an hour ahead than miss it this 'ere night," said one of the four. "I ain't been so thirsty since I come round the Horn in '50, an' we run short of water. Somebody 'll get hurt if ther ain't any bitters on the old concern — they will, or my name ain't Perkins."

"Don't count on your chickens 'fore they 're hatched, Perky," said one of the party, as he adjusted the domino under the rim of his hat. "S'posin, there shud be too many for us?"

"Stiddy, stiddy, Cranks," remonstrated the Colonel. "Nobody ever gets along ef they 'low 'emselves to be skeered."

"Fact," chimed in the smallest and thinnest man in the party. "The Bible says somethin' mighty hot 'bout that: I disremember adzackly how it goes; but I 've heerd Parson Buzzy, down in Maine, preach a rippin' old sermon many a time. The old man never thort what a comfort them sermons wuz a-goin' to be to a road agent, though. That time we stopped Slim Mike's stage, and he did n't hev no more manners than to draw on me, them sermons wuz a perfect blessing to me — the thought of 'em cleared my head as quick as a cocktail. An' —"

"I don't want to dispute Logroller's pious strain," interrupted the Colonel; "but ez it 's Old Black that 's drivin' to-day instead of Slim Mike, an' ez Old Black allers makes his time, had n't we better vamoose?"

The door of the shanty was hastily closed, and the men filed through the thicket until near the road, when they *marched rapidly* on in parallel lines with it. After about

half an hour, Perkins, who was leading, halted and wiped his perspiring brow with his shirt-sleeve.

"Fur enough from home now," said he. "'T aint no use bein' a gentleman ef yer have to work too hard."

"Safe enough, I reckon," replied the Colonel. "We 'll do the usual; I 'll halt 'em, Logroller 'tends to the driver, Cranks takes the boot, an' Mac an' Perk takes right an' left. An' — I know it 's tough — but considerin' how everlastin' eternally hard-up we are, I reckon we 'll have to ask contributions from the ladies, too, ef thar 's any aboard — eh, boys?"

"Reckon so," replied Logroller, with a chuckle that seemed to inspire even his black domino with a merry wrinkle or two. "What 's the use of woman's rights ef they don't ever have a chance of exercisin' 'em? Hevin' their purses borrowed 'ud show 'em the hull doctrine in a bran-new light."

"Come, come, old boys," interposed the Colonel, "that 's the crack of Old Black's whip! Pick yer bushes — quick! All jump when I whistle!"

Each man secreted himself near the roadside. The stage came swinging along handsomely; the insides were laughing heartily about something; and Old Black was just giving a delicate touch to the flank of the off leader, when the Colonel gave a shrill, quick whistle, and five men sprang into the road.

The horses stopped as suddenly as if it were a matter of common occurrence. Old Black dropped the reins, crossed his legs, and stared into the sky, and the passengers all put out their heads with a rapidity equaled only by that with which they withdrew them as they saw the dominos and revolvers of the road agents.

"Seems to be something the matter, gentlemen," said the Colonel blandly, as he opened the door. "Won't you please get out? Don't you trouble yourself to draw, 'cos *my friend here 's got* his weapon cocked, an' his fingers is

WON'T YOU PLEASE GET OUT?

rather nervous. Ain't got a handkerchief, hev yer ? " asked he of the first passenger who descended from the stage. " Hev ? Well, now, that 's lucky. Just put yer hands behind you, please, — so, — that 's it." And the unfortunate man was securely bound in an instant.

The remaining passengers were treated with similar courtesy, and the Colonel and his friends examined the pockets of the captives. Old Black remained unmolested, for who ever heard of a stage-driver having money ?

" Boys," said the Colonel, calling his brother agents aside, and comparing receipts, " 't aint much of a haul ; but there 's only one woman, an' she 's old enough to be a feller's grandmother. Better let her alone, eh ? "

" Like enough she 'll pan out more 'n all the rest of the stage put together," growled Cranks, carefully testing the thickness of the case of a gold watch. " Just like the low-lived deceitfulness of some folks to hire an old woman to carry their money, so it 'd go safer. Maybe what she 's got ain't nothin' to some folks that 's got hosses that kin win money at races, but — "

The Colonel abruptly ended the conversation and approached the stage. He was very chivalrous, but Cranks's sarcastic reference to Tipsie needed avenging, and as he could not, consistently with business arrangements, put an end to Cranks, the old lady would have to suffer.

" I beg your pardin, ma'am," said the Colonel, raising his hat politely with one hand while he opened the coach door with the other, " but we 're takin' up a collection for some deservin' object. We wuz a-goin' to make the gentlemen fork over the full amount, but ez they ain't got enough, we will hev to bother you."

The old lady trembled, felt for her pocketbook, raised her veil. The Colonel looked into her face, slammed the stage door, and sitting on the hub of one of the wheels, stared *vacantly* into space.

"Nothin'?" queried Perkins in a whisper, and with a face full of genuine sympathy.

"No — yes," said the Colonel dreamily. "That is, untie 'em and let the stage go ahead," he continued, springing to his feet. "I'll hurry back to the cabin." And the Colonel dashed into the bushes and left his followers so paralyzed that Old Black afterward remarked that "ef there 'd been anybody to the hosses he could hev cleaned the hull crowd with his whip."

The passengers, now relieved of their weapons, were unbound, allowed to enter the stage, and the door was slammed, upon which Old Black picked up his reins as coolly as if he had laid them down at a station while the horses were being changed; then he cracked his whip and the stage rolled off, while the Colonel's party hastened back to their hut, fondly inspecting as they went certain flasks they had obtained while transacting their business with the occupants of the stage.

Great was the surprise of the road agents as they entered their hut, for there stood the Colonel in a clean white shirt, and in a suit of clothing made from the limited, spare wardrobes of the other members of the gang.

But the suspicious Cranks speedily subordinated his wonder to his prudence, as, laying on the table a watch, two pistols, a pocketbook, and a heavy purse, he exclaimed: —

"Come, Colonel, business before pleasure; let 's divide an' scatter. Ef anybody should hear about this robbery, an' find our trail, an' ketch the traps in our possession, they might —"

"Divide yerselves," said the Colonel, with abruptness and a great oath; "I don't want none of it."

"Colonel," said Perkins, removing his own domino and looking anxiously into the leader's face, "be you sick? Here 's some bully brandy which I found in one of the passengers' pockets."

"I hain't nothin'," replied the Colonel, with averted eyes. "I 'm a-goin', and I 'm a-retirin' from this business, forever."

"Ain't a-goin' to turn evidence?" cried Cranks, grasping the pistol on the table.

"I 'm a-goin' to make a lead mine of you ef you don't take that back!" roared the Colonel, with a bound which caused Cranks to drop the pistol and retire precipitately, apologizing as he went. "I 'm a-goin' to 'tend to my own business, an' that 's enough to keep any man bizzy. Somebody lend me fifty dollars till I see him ag'in."

Perkins pressed the money into the Colonel's hand, and within two minutes the Colonel was on Tipsie's back and had galloped off in the direction the stage had taken.

He overtook it, he passed it, and still he galloped on.

The people at Mud Gulch knew the Colonel well, and made a rule never to be astonished at anything he did; but they made an exception to the rule when the Colonel canvassed the principal barrooms for men who wished to purchase a horse; and when a gambler who was flush obtained Tipsie for twenty slugs, — only a thousand dollars, when the Colonel had always said that there was n't gold enough on top of ground to buy her, — Mud Gulch experienced a decided sensation.

One or two enterprising persons soon discovered that the Colonel was not in a communicative mood; so every one retired to his favorite saloon to bet according to his own opinion of the Colonel's motives and actions.

But when the Colonel, after remaining in a barber shop for half an hour, emerged with his face clean-shaved and hair neatly trimmed and parted, betting was so wild that a cool-headed sporting man speedily made a fortune by betting against every theory that was advanced.

Then the Colonel made a tour of the stores and fitted himself *with a new suit* of clothes, carefully eschewing all of the

generous patterns and pronounced colors so dear to the average miner. He bought a new hat, and put on a pair of boots, and pruned his finger nails, and, stranger than all, he mildly declined all invitations to drink.

As the Colonel stood in the door of the principal saloon where the stage always stopped, the Challenge Hill constable was seen to approach the Colonel and tap him on the shoulder, upon which all men who bet that the Colonel was dodging somebody claimed the stakes. But those who stood near the Colonel heard the constable say: —

"Colonel, I take it all back. When I seed you get out of Challenge Hill it come to me that you might be in the road-agent business, so I follered you — duty, you know. But when I seed you sell Tipsie I knew I was on the wrong trail. I would n't suspect you now if all the stages in the State wuz robbed; and I 'll give you satisfaction any way you want it."

"It 's all right," said the Colonel, with a smile.

The constable afterward said that nobody had any idea of how curiously the Colonel smiled when his beard was off.

Suddenly the stage pulled up at the door with a crash, and the male passengers hurried into the saloon in a state of utter indignation and impecuniosity.

The story of the robbery attracted everybody, and during the excitement the Colonel quietly slipped out and opened the door of the stage. The old lady started, and cried: —

"George!"

And the Colonel jumped into the stage and put his arms tenderly around the trembling form of the old lady, exclaiming: —

"Mother!"

A GENTLEMAN OF LA PORTE

He was also a Pioneer. A party who broke through the snows of the winter of '51, and came upon the triangular little valley afterwards known as La Porte, found him the sole inhabitant. He had subsisted for three months on two biscuits a day and a few inches of bacon, in a hut made of bark and brushwood. Yet, when the explorers found him, he was quite alert, hopeful, and gentlemanly. But I cheerfully make way here for the terser narrative of Captain Henry Symes, commanding the prospecting party: —

"We kem upon him, gentlemen, suddent-like, jest abreast of a rock like this" — demonstrating the distance — "ez near ez you be. He sees us, and he dives into his cabin and comes out ag'in with a *tall hat*, — a stovepipe, gentlemen, — and, blank me! gloves! He was a tall, thin feller, holler in the cheek, — ez might be, — and off color in his face, ez was nat'ral, takin' in account his starvation grub. But he lifts his hat to us, so, and sez he, 'Happy to make your acquaintance, gentlemen! I'm afraid you ex-perienced some difficulty in getting here. Take a cigyar.' And he pulls out a fancy cigar-case with two real Havanas in it. 'I wish there was more,' sez he.

"'Ye don't smoke yourself?' sez I.

"'Seldom,' sez he; which was a lie, for that very arternoon I seed him hangin' ontu a short pipe like a suckin' baby ontu a bottle. 'I kept these cigyars for any gentleman that might drop in.'

"'I reckon ye see a great deal o' the best society yer,' sez Bill Parker, starin' at the hat and gloves and winkin' at the boys.

"'A few Ind-i-ans occasionally,' sez he.

"'Injins!' sez we.

"'Yes. Very quiet good fellows in their way. They have once or twice brought me game, which I refused, as the poor fellows have had a pretty hard time of it themselves.'

"Now, gentlemen, we was, ez you know, rather quiet men — rather peaceable men; but — hevin' been shot at three times by these yar 'good' Injins, and Parker hisself havin' a matter o' three inches of his own skelp lying loose in their hands and he walkin' round wearin' green leaves on his head like a Roman statoo — it *did* kinder seem ez if this yer stranger was playin' it rather low down on the boys. Bill Parker gets up and takes a survey o' him, and sez he, peaceful-like —

"'Ye say these yer Injins — these yer *quiet* Injins — offered yer game?'

"'They did!' sez he.

"'And you refoosed?'

"'I did,' sez he.

"'Must hev made 'em feel kinder bad — sorter tortered their sensitiv' naters?' sez Bill.

"'They really seemed quite disappointed.'

"'In course,' sez Bill. 'And now mout I ask who you be?'

"'Excuse me,' says the stranger; and, darn my skin! if he does n't hist out a keerd-case, and, handin' it over to Bill, sez, 'Here 's my kyard.'

"Bill took it and read out aloud, 'J. Trott, Kentucky.'

"'It 's a pooty keerd,' sez Bill.

"'I 'm glad you like it,' says the stranger.

"'I reckon the other fifty-one of the deck ez as pooty — all of 'em Jacks and left bowers,' sez Bill.

"The stranger sez nothin', but kinder draws back from Bill; but Bill ups and sez —

"'*Wot is your little* game, Mister J. Trott, of Kentucky?'

"'I don't think I quite understand you,' sez the stranger, a holler fire comin' intu his cheeks like ez if they was the bowl of a pipe.

"'Wot's this yer kid-glove business? — this yer tall hat paradin'? — this yer circus foolin'? Wot's it all about? *Who* are ye, anyway?'

"The stranger stands up, and sez he, 'Ez I don't quarrel with guests on my own land,' sez he, 'I think you'll allow I'm — a gentleman!' sez he.

"With that he takes off his tall hat and makes a low bow, so, and turns away — like this; but Bill lites out of a suddent with his right foot and drives his No. 10 boot clean through the crown of that tall hat like one o' them circus hoops.

"That's about ez fur ez I remember. Gentlemen! thar wa'n't but *one* man o' that hull crowd ez could actooally swear what happened next, and that man never told. For a kind o' whirlwind jest then took place in that valley. I disremember anythin' but dust and bustlin'. Thar wasn't no yellin', thar wasn't no shootin'. It was one o' them suddent things that left even a six-shooter out in the cold. When I kem to in the *chapparel* — bein' oncomfortable like from hevin' only half a shirt on — I found nigh on three pounds o' gravel and stones in my pockets and a stiffness in my ha'r. I looks up and sees Bill hangin' in the forks of a hickory saplin' twenty feet above me.

"'Cap,' sez he, in an inquirin' way, 'hez the tornado passed?'

"'Which?' sez I.

"'This yer elemental disturbance — is it over?'

"'I reckon,' sez I.

"'Because,' sez he, 'afore this yer electrical phenomenon took place I hed a slight misunderstanding with a stranger, and I'd like to apologize!'

"*And with that he* climbs down, peaceful-like, and goes into

the shanty, and comes out, hand in hand with that stranger, smilin' like an infant. And that 's the first time, I reckon, we know'd anythin' about the gentleman of La Porte."

It is by no means improbable that the above incidents are slightly exaggerated in narration, and the cautious reader will do well to accept with some reservation the particular phenomenon alluded to by the Captain. But the fact remains that the Gentleman of La Porte was allowed an eccentricity and enjoyed an immunity from contemporaneous criticism only to be attributed to his personal prowess. Indeed, this was once publicly expressed. "It 'pears to me," said a meek newcomer, — who, on the strength of his having received news of the death of a distant relative in the "States," had mounted an exceedingly large crape mourning-band on his white felt hat, and was consequently obliged to "treat" the crowd in the barroom of Parker's Hotel, — "it 'pears to me, gentlemen, that this yer taxin' the nat'ral expression of grief, and allowin' such festive exhibitions as yaller kid gloves, on the gentleman on my right, is sorter inconsistent. I don't mind treatin' the crowd, gentlemen, but this yer platform and resolutions don't seem to keep step."

This appeal to the *Demos* of every American crowd, of course, precluded any reply from the Gentleman of La Porte, but left it to the palpable chairman — the barkeeper, Mr. William Parker.

"Young man," he replied severely, "when ye can wear yaller kids like *that* man and make 'em hover in the air like summer lightnin', and strike in four places to once! — *then* ye kin talk! *Then* ye kin wear your shirt half-masted if ye like!" A sentiment to which the crowd assenting, the meek man paid for the drinks, and would have, in addition, taken off his mourning-band, but was courteously stopped by the Gentleman of La Porte.

And yet, I protest, there was little suggestive of this baleful prowess in his face and figure. He was loose-jointed and long-limbed, yet with a certain mechanical, slow rigidity of movement that seemed incompatible with alacrity and dexterity. His arms were unusually long, and his hands hung with their palms forward. In walking his feet "toed in," suggesting an aboriginal ancestry. His face, as I remember it, was equally inoffensive. Thin and melancholy, the rare smile that lit it up was only a courteous reception of some attribute of humor in another which he was unable himself to appreciate. His straight black hair and high cheek-bones would have heightened his Indian resemblance; but these were offset by two most extraordinary eyes that were utterly at variance with this, or, indeed, any other, suggestion of his features. They were yellowish-blue, globular, and placidly staring. They expressed nothing that the Gentleman of La Porte thought — nothing that he did — nothing that he might reasonably be expected to do. They were at variance with his speech, his carriage, even his remarkable attire. More than one irreverent critic had suggested that he had probably lost his own eyes in some frontier difficulty, and had hurriedly replaced them with those of his antagonist.

Had this ingenious hypothesis reached the ears of the Gentleman, he would probably have contented himself with a simple denial of the fact, overlooking any humorous incongruity of statement. For, as has been already intimated, among his other privileges he enjoyed an absolute immunity from any embarrassing sense of the ludicrous. His deficient sense of humor and habitual gravity, in a community whose severest dramatic episodes were mitigated by some humorous detail, and whose customary relaxation was the playing of practical jokes, was marked with a certain frankness that was discomposing. "I think," he remarked to a well-known citizen of *La Porte*, "that, in alluding to the argumentative

character of Mr. William Peghammer, you said you had found him lying awake at night contradicting the 'Katydids.' This he himself assures me is not true, and I may add that I passed the night with him in the woods without any such thing occurring. You seem to have *lied.*" The severity of this reception checked further humorous exhibitions in his presence. Indeed, I am not certain but it invested him with a certain aristocratic isolation.

Thus identified with the earliest history of the Camp, Mr. Trott participated in its fortunes and shared its prosperity. As one of the original locators of the "Eagle Mine" he enjoyed a certain income which enabled him to live without labor and to freely indulge his few and inexpensive tastes. After his own personal adornment — which consisted chiefly in the daily wearing of spotless linen — he was fond of giving presents. These possessed, perhaps, a sentimental rather than intrinsic value. To an intimate friend he had once given a cane, the stick whereof was cut from a wild grapevine which grew above the spot where the famous "Eagle *lead*" was first discovered in La Porte; the head originally belonged to a cane presented to Mr. Trott's father, and the ferrule was made of the last silver half-dollar which he had brought to California. "And yet, do you know," said the indignant recipient of this touching gift, "I offered to put it down for a five-dollar ante last night over at Robinson's, and the boys would n't see it, and allowed I 'd better leave the board. Thar 's no appreciation of sacred things in this yer Camp."

It was in this lush growth and springtime of La Porte that the Gentleman was chosen Justice of the Peace by the unanimous voice of his fellow-citizens. That he should have exercised his functions with dignity was natural; that he should have shown a singular lenity in the levyings of *fines and the* infliction of penalties was, however, an unexpected and discomposing discovery to the settlement.

"The law requires me, sir," he would say to some unmistakable culprit, "to give you the option of ten days' imprisonment or the fine of ten dollars. If you have not the money with you, the clerk will doubtless advance it for you." It is needless to add that the clerk invariably advanced the money, or that when the Court adjourned the Judge instantly reimbursed him. In one instance only did the sturdy culprit — either from "pure cussedness" or a weaker desire to spare the Judge the expense of his conviction — *refuse* to borrow the amount of the fine from the clerk. He was accordingly remanded to the County Jail. It is related — on tolerably good authority — that when the Court had adjourned the Court was seen, in spotless linen and yellow gloves, making in the direction of the County Jail — a small *adobe* building, which also served as a Hall of Records; that, after ostentatiously consulting certain records, the Court entered the Jail as if in casual official inspection; that, later in the evening, the Deputy Sheriff having charge of the prisoner was dispatched for a bottle of whisky and a pack of cards. But as the story here alleges that the Deputy, that evening, lost the amount of his month's stipend and the Court its entire yearly salary to the prisoner, in a friendly game of "cut-throat euchre," to relieve the tedium of the prisoner's confinement, the whole story has been denied, as incompatible with Judge Trott's dignity, though not inconsistent with his kindliness of nature.

It is certain, however, that his lenity would have brought him into disfavor but for a redeeming exhibition of his unofficial strength. A young and talented lawyer from Sacramento had been retained in some civil case before Judge Trott, but, confident of his success on appeal from this primitive tribunal, he had scarcely concealed his contempt for it in his closing argument. Judge Trott, when he had finished, sat unmoved save for a slight coloring of his high *cheek-bones.* But here I must again borrow the graphic

language of a spectator: "When the Judge had hung out them air red danger signals he sez, quite peaceful-like, to that yer Sacramento Shrimp, sez he, 'Young gentleman,' sez he, 'do you know that I could fine ye fifty dollars for contempt o' Court?' 'And if ye could,' sez the shrimp, peart and sassy as a hossfly, 'I reckon I could pay it.' 'But I ought to add,' sez the Gentleman, sad-like, 'that I don't purpose to do it. I believe in freedom of speech and — action!' He then rises up, onlimbers hisself, so to speak, stretches out that yer Hand o' Providence o' his, lites into that yer shrimp, lifts him up and scoots him through the window twenty feet into the ditch. 'Call the next case,' sez he, sittin' down again, with them big white eyes o' his looking peaceful-like ez if nothin' partikler had happened."

Happy would it have been for the Gentleman had these gentle eccentricities produced no greater result. But a fatal and hitherto unexpected weakness manifested itself in the very court in which he had triumphed, and for a time imperiled his popularity. A lady of dangerous antecedents and great freedom of manner, who was the presiding goddess of the "Wheel of Fortune" in the principal gambling-saloon of La Porte, brought an action against several of its able-bodied citizens for entering the saloon with "force and arms" and destroying the peculiar machinery of her game. She was ably supported by counsel, and warmly sympathized with by a gentleman who was not her husband. Yet in spite of this valuable coöperation she was not successful. The offense was clearly proved; but the jury gave a verdict in favor of the *defendants*, without leaving their seats.

Judge Trott turned his mild, inoffensive eyes upon them.

"Do I understand you to say that this is your final verdict?"

"You kin bet your boots, your Honor," responded the *foreman* with cheerful but well-meaning irreverence, "that *that 's about the* way the thing points."

"Mr. Clerk," said Judge Trott, "record the verdict, and then enter my resignation as Judge of this court."

He rose and left the bench. In vain did various influential citizens follow him with expostulations; in vain did they point out the worthlessness of the plaintiff and the worthlessness of her cause — in which he had sacrificed himself. In vain did the jury intimate that his resignation was an insult to *them*. Judge Trott turned abruptly upon the foreman, with the old ominous glow in his high cheek-bones.

"I did n't understand you," said he.

"I was saying," said the foreman hastily, "that it was useless to argue the case any longer." And withdrew slightly in advance of the rest of the jury, as became his official position. But Judge Trott never again ascended the bench.

It was quite a month after his resignation, and the Gentleman was sitting in the twilight "under the shadow of his own vine and fig tree," — a figure of speech locally interpreted as a "giant redwood" and a mossy creeper, — before the door of that cabin in which he was first introduced to the reader, — when he was faintly conscious of the outlines of a female form and the tones of a female voice.

The Gentleman hesitated, and placed over his right eye a large gold eyeglass, which had been lately accepted by the Camp as his most recent fashionable folly. The form was unfamiliar, but the voice the Gentleman instantly recognized as belonging to the plaintiff in his late momentous judicial experience. It is proper to say here that it was the voice of Mademoiselle Clotilde Montmorency; it is only just to add that, speaking no French, and being of unmistakable Anglo-Saxon origin, her name was evidently derived from the game over which she had presided, which was, in the baleful estimation of the Camp, of foreign extraction.

"I *wanted to* know," said Miss Clotilde, sitting down

on a bench beside the Gentleman — "that is, me and Jake Woods thought we'd like to know — *how much* you consider yourself out of pocket by this yer resignation of yours?"

Scarcely hearing the speech, and more concerned with the apparition itself, Judge Trott stammered vaguely, "I have the pleasure of addressing Miss —"

"If you mean by that that you think you don't know me, never saw me before, and don't want to see me ag'in, why, I reckon that's the polite way o' putting it," said Miss Montmorency, with enforced calmness, scraping some dead leaves together with the tip of her parasol as if she were covering up her emotions. "But I'm Miss Montmorency. I was saying that Jake and me thought that — seein' as you stood by us when them hounds on the jury give in their hellish lying verdict — Jake and me thought it was n't the square thing for you to lose your situation just for me. 'Find out from the Judge,' sez he, 'jist what he reckons he 's lost by this yer resignation — putting it at his own figgers.' That 's what Jake said. Jake's a square man — I kin say *that* of him, anyhow."

"I don't think I understand you," said Judge Trott simply.

"That's it! That 's just it!" continued Miss Clotilde, with only half-suppressed bitterness. "That 's what I told Jake. I sez, 'The Judge won't understand you nor me. He's that proud he won't have anything to say to us. Did n't he meet me square on the street last Tuesday and never let on that he saw me — never even nodded when I nodded to him?'"

"My dear madam," said Judge Trott hurriedly, "I assure you you are mistaken. I did *not* see you. Pray believe me. The fact is — I am afraid to confess it even to myself — but I find that, day by day, my eyesight is growing *weaker and* weaker." He stopped and sighed.

Miss Montmorency, glancing upward at his face, saw it was pale and agitated. With a woman's swift intuition, she believed this weakness explained the otherwise gratuitous effrontery of his incongruous eyes, and it was to her a sufficient apology. It is only the inexplicable in a man's ugliness that a woman never pardons.

"Then ye really don't recognize me?" said Miss Clotilde, a little softened, and yet a little uneasy.

"I — am — afraid — not," said Trott, with an apologetic smile.

Miss Clotilde paused. "Do you mean to say you could n't see me when I was in court during the trial?"

Judge Trott blushed. "I am afraid I saw only — an — outline."

"I had on," continued Miss Clotilde rapidly, "a straw hat, with magenta silk lining, turned up so — magenta ribbons tied here"—indicating her round throat — "a reg'lar 'Frisco hat — don't you remember?"

"I — that is — I am afraid —"

"And one of them figgered silk 'Dollar Vardens,'" continued Miss Clotilde anxiously.

Judge Trott smiled politely, but vaguely. Miss Clotilde saw that he evidently had not recognized this rare and becoming costume. She scattered the leaves again and dug her parasol into the ground.

"Then you never saw me at all?"

"Never distinctly."

"Ef it 's a fair question betwixt you and me," she said suddenly, "what made you resign?"

"I could not remain Judge of a court that was obliged to record a verdict so unjust as that given by the jury in your case," replied Judge Trott warmly.

"Say that ag'in, old man," said Miss Clotilde, with an admiration which half apologized for the irreverence of epithet.

Judge Trott urbanely repeated the substance of his remark in another form.

Miss Montmorency was silent a moment. "Then it was n't *me*?" she said finally.

"I don't think I catch your meaning," replied the Judge, a little awkwardly.

"Why — ME. It was n't on account of *me* you did it?"

"No," said the Judge pleasantly.

There was another pause. Miss Montmorency balanced her parasol on the tip of her toe. "Well," she said finally, "this is n't getting much information for Jake."

"For whom?"

"Jake."

"Oh — your husband?"

Miss Montmorency clicked the snap of her bracelet smartly on her wrist and said sharply, "Who said he was 'my husband'?"

"Oh, I beg your pardon."

"I said Jake Woods. He 's a square man — I can say *that* for him. He sez to me, 'You kin tell the Judge that whatever he chooses to take from us — it ain't no bribery nor corruption, nor nothin' o' that kind. It 's all on the square. The trial 's over; he is n't Judge any longer; he can't do anything for us — he ain't expected to do anything for us but one thing. And that is to give us the satisfaction of knowing that he has n't lost anything by us — that he has n't lost anything by being a square man and acting on the square.' There! that's what he said. I 've said it! Of course I know what *you 'll* say. I know you 'll get wrathy. I know you 're mad now! I know you're too proud to touch a dollar from the like of us — if you were starving. I know you 'll tell Jake to go to hell, and me with him! And who the hell cares?"

She had worked herself up to this passion so suddenly, *so outrageously* and inconsistently, that it was not strange

that it ended in an hysterical burst of equally illogical tears. She sank down again on the bench she had gradually risen from, and applied the backs of her yellow-gloved hands to her eyes, still holding the parasol at a rigid angle with her face. To her infinite astonishment Judge Trott laid one hand gently upon her shoulder and with the other possessed himself of the awkward parasol, which he tactfully laid on the bench beside her.

"You are mistaken, my dear young lady," he said, with a respectful gravity,—"deeply mistaken, if you think I feel anything but kindness and gratitude for your offer—an offer so kind and unusual that even you yourself feel that I could not accept it. No! Let me believe that in doing what I thought was only my duty as a *Judge*, I gained your good-will, and let me feel that in doing my duty now as a *man*, I shall still keep it."

Miss Clotilde had lifted her face towards his, as if deeply and wonderingly following his earnest words. But she only said, "Can you see me in this light?—at this distance? Put up your glass and try."

Her face was not far from his. I have forgotten whether I have said that she was a pretty woman. She had been once prettier. But she retained enough of her good looks to invest the "Wheel of Fortune," over which she had presided, with a certain seductive and bewildering uncertainty, which increased the risk of the players. It was, in fact, this unhallowed combination of Beauty and Chance that excited the ire of La Porte—who deemed it unprofessional and not "on the square."

She had fine eyes. Possibly Judge Trott had never before been so near eyes that were so fine and so—expressive. He lifted his head with some embarrassment and a blush on his high cheek-bones. Then, partly from instinctive courtesy, partly from a desire to bring in a third party to relieve his embarrassment, he said—

"I hope you will make your friend, Mr. ——, understand that I appreciate his kindness, even if I can't accept it."

"Oh, you mean Jake," said the lady. "Oh, *he's* gone home to the States. I'll make it all right with *him!*"

There was another embarrassing pause — possibly over the absence of Jake. At last it was broken by Miss Montmorency. "You must take care of your eyes, for I want you to know me the next time you see me."

So they parted. The Judge *did* recognize her on several other occasions. And then La Porte was stirred to its depths in hillside and tunnel with a strange rumor. Judge Trott had married Miss Jane Thomson, *alias* Miss Clotilde Montmorency — in San Francisco! For a few hours a storm of indignation and rage swept over the town; it was believed to have been a deep-laid plan and conspiracy. It was perfectly well understood that Judge Trott's resignation was the price of her hand — and of the small fortune she was known to be possessed of. Of his character nothing remained that was assailable. A factitious interest and pathos was imported into the character and condition of her last lover — Jake Woods — the victim of the double treachery of Judge Trott and Miss Clotilde. A committee was formed to write a letter of sympathy to this man, who, a few months before, had barely escaped lynching at their hands. The angry discussion was at last broken by the voice of the first speaker in this veracious narrative, Captain Henry Symes —

"Thar's one feature in this yer case that ye don't seem to know, and that oughter be considered. The day she married him in San Francisco she had just come from the doctor's, who had told her that Trott was *helplessly blind!* Gentlemen, when a gal like that throws over her whole life, her whole perfession, and a square man like Jake Woods, *to marry* a blind man without a dollar — just because he *once stood up* for her — *on principle*, damn me ef I see any

man good enough to go back on her for it! Ef the Judge is willing to kinder overlook little bygone eccentricities o' hers for the sake o' being cared for and looked arter by her, that's *his* lookout! And you'll excoose me if, arter my experience, I reckon it ain't exactly a healthy business to interfere with the domestic concerns of the Gentleman of La Porte."

MISCELLANEOUS

WASHINGTON IN NEW JERSEY

AN OLD HOMESTEAD

AN AUTHOR'S VISIT TO HEADQUARTERS — OLD-TIME REMINISCENCES AND MODERN VIEWS — THE COMING OF THE AUCTIONEER'S HAMMER

MORRISTOWN, N. J., JUNE 24 [1873].

I HAVE been to Washington's Headquarters, at Morristown. The adult American who has not at some time stood beneath the same roof that once sheltered the Father of his Country is to be pitied and feared. The opportunities for performing this simple, patriotic act are so ample and varied that a studious disregard of them is, I am satisfied, consistent only with moral turpitude. Such a person may, indeed, offer as an excuse that he has sat in a chair once occupied by Washington; that he has drunk from a mug once used by Washington; or that he has in his extreme youth talked with an aged person who distinctly remembered Washington; but those are supererogatory acts which do not take the place of this primary obligation. When we consider the number of roofs that Washington has apparently slept under; when we reflect upon the infinite toil and travel which the great and good man must have undergone to place this proud privilege within the easy reach of every American citizen, the omission to avail one's self of it is simply despicable. The Valley Forge experience has always been deemed a spectacle of noble devotion and unparalled self-sacrifice, but I have preferred, I confess, to lie awake nights thinking of this unselfish hero, rising ere it was yet day, hurrying away, accompanied *only* by his 150 colored body-servants, each

with longevity and garrulity depicted on his face, hurrying away in order to reach the next town in time to make another roof-tree historical. I have thought of him pursuing this noble duty with dignified haste, pausing only to pat the heads of toddling infants, who in after years were destined to distinctly remember it, until the tears have risen to my eyes.

So that when I heard that Washington's Headquarters at Morristown was to be sold at public auction on the 25th, I determined to go and see it. It was my first intimation that it was still in existence; I had perhaps often passed it without knowing the fact, for it is a peculiarity of this kind of property that its historic quality is always sprung upon you like a trap; that you are hardly safe in any old tenement; that you drop unconsciously into the Washington chair, or imbibe serenely from the Washington mug, and that the fact is brought sharply upon you like a pin in the cushion or a fly in the milk. In the course of time this expectation naturally excites a morbid activity of the intellect, but only once do I remember being mistaken in the result. It was in a Sierran solitude, where I had encamped, and where I was solicited to take supper in the newly-built cabin of an Eastern immigrant. At supper I was supplied with an ordinary-looking china mug of a pale-blue willow pattern. "That mug," said my host, "has a little story connected on it. It has been in our family nigh on a hundred year. It belonged to my grandfather. At the siege of Yorktown, he lived convenient to the battle-field, and the guns was posted all around the house. All of a suddent — " "I remember," I interposed hastily. "Suddenly a commanding form darkened the little doorway, and a dignified but courteous voice asked for a drink of water. Your grandfather rose — " "I was goin' on to say," continued my host calmly, "that the boomin' o' them guns broke every *bit of china in* the house, and that grandfather had to buy

a new set next day, and this yer one is the last of them." I put down my cup and gazed long and earnestly at the man. His face was calm, thoughtful, and even sad — a slight tremulousness of the left eyelid, and a depression of the lower angle of the mouth on the same side, easily attributable to historic emotion, were the only evidences of feeling.

But here was a veritable Headquarters of Washington — based on no local tradition, but standing boldly in history. There had been a temporary Headquarters at the Freemasons' Tavern on "the village green." But the house was gone, the Freemasons were dust these fifty years, and on the "village green" the gray shaft that commemorated the Morristown dead of the last civil war obliterated the past. How, then, remote and bloodless looked the Jersey campaign of '77 beside the names on this obelisk. How rusty those old blood-stains appeared beside the bright red, still warm current of to-day. I hurried past it, and out into the leafy road that led to the historic house.

It had been my original intention to take with me a certain humorist — a man who had made some little reputation by a habit of scoffing at certain revered objects by humorous analysis of their effect upon others; a man who kept you in high spirits, and left you vapid and uncomfortable; a man whose company was a dissipation that brought a dreadful to-morrow morning after it; a man who was always to be depended upon, but never to be trusted. I concluded, however, not to take him with me. "You 'll be sorry you did n't," he said gloomily, as he leaned against a fence with the settled melancholy of his profession. "You 're not to be trusted alone. I 'd like to get a shy at G. W. sometime. Look around his garden — not a cherry tree to be seen. Tell me that he can get over that habit — that he did n't sleep with a hatchet under his pillow, and get up in the dead of night to do it. And then he *had no sense of* humor. When the staff were doing

conundrums down there one night, and Greene asked him 'Why a gooseberry was like a Hessian,' did n't he reply, 'General Greene, I cannot tell a lie — there is absolutely no connection in nature between the two,' and spoil the boys of their little fun?" And so I left him muttering, with a look in his eye as if he were even then elaborating a humorous account of my visit, based entirely upon speculation of my character, and bearing every external evidence of greater truth than my own narrative.

But here was the house. A canny walk and a gentle ascent under a few old trees led to the porch. On that bright day of yellow June its hard outlines and scant decoration were somehow lost in the gracious atmosphere. The door stood open, and I entered at once a spacious hall — almost the only indication of the dignity of its former occupant. It divided the mansion east and west, and through a rear door as large as the front gave a view upon a descending lawn and orchard, and a shimmer of the Whippany River in the lower distance. "In the hottest day in summer," said the gentle hostess, "there is always a breeze through the hall." Surely Nature, at least, was not forgetful. It was pleasant to think that when the fervid July sun scorched the elaborate pink and blue tiled roofs of the modern villas in the avenue yonder, that the mountain breezes from those wooded heights that he had made historic, loved to meet and play and linger here. "During his time the door was never shut," continues the lady, like a pleasant Greek chorus, "but always open, as you see." Was it the Virginian habit still strong, or a military necessity? Think of it in that memorable winter of '77, when the thermometer stood below zero for weeks, and the Hudson River was frozen over at the Battery! Yet I am somehow thankful that the humorist is not with me to comment upon this startling discovery of a new and painful *youthful habit.*

Then we went into the reception room or parlor, and saw the elaborate antique table desk, opening in the middle, — a Washington relic indubitably, — and then into the bedroom where he slept, the office where he wrote, the dining-room in which he ate, and looked in the glass at which he shaved. As no one ever saw Washington with a beard, and as his habits were methodical, perhaps this insignificant bit of furniture is most characteristic and notable. There was not, perhaps, much to see. You will find more elaborate old furniture in modern drawing-rooms. I have stood in more spacious and characteristic colonial dwellings. It is far unlike the Cambridge Headquarters in which Longfellow is set as a precious jewel; but in its scant decoration, in its faded and economic gentility, in its quiet, stern uncompromising asceticism, it is full of a Past, a Past entirely its own, the Spartan period of the Revolution. The genius of the place descends upon you as you stand there. Even in this gracious June sunlight you shiver and turn cold. Gaunt faces peer at you through the windows; there is the echo of uneasy, discontented footsteps in this hall; and yet through all a pathetic patience flowing from one lonely self-contained figure subdues and saddens every complaining beam and rafter in the ancient house.

It was at this window that the great commander stood and saw the mutinous Connecticut troops file past and clamor for the wages long due that he had not to bestow. It was in this room that he, proud man, appealed to the already impoverished Jersey farmers for a few weeks' more rations for his starving men. It was at this table that he wrote that pathetic letter to Congress. It was here that he was "closeted closely" with Lafayette. There was scant cheer in this little dining-room that winter. Yet here sat that young West Indian, scarce turned of twenty, Alexander Hamilton, whom Washington in moments of rare tenderness called "my boy" and made recipient of his

confidence. What a pleasant staff appointment for a gay young fellow: smallpox in the distant village and famine in quarters. Here, too, sat the "Old Secretary," as they call him — as methodical as Washington and conscious of his ways; and here the turbulent Sullivan, and Howe in New York feasting and junketing, and only a river, dangerously filled with ice at times, between!

And all this to be sold on the 25th of June to the highest bidder. You can, as you stand there in fancy, already hear the auctioneer's hammer. The setting sun from without looks into the western windows, lingering fondly, as well it may, over the old house that it knows so well — and on whose like it never shall look again. It steals a little higher toward the peaked gable. Going, going. There is a glory on its roof for a moment, and it is Gone.

WHAT BRET HARTE SAW

THE FIRST GLIMPSES OF THE STRUGGLE — SCENES ALONG THE COURSE — THE ART OF WAITING — HOW YALE WON THE GREAT RACE

SPRINGFIELD, July 17. [1873.]

A BROAD, still stream, swinging lazily round a curve — that was our first glimpse from the car window of the battle-ground. Something on its smooth, glistening surface, that moved like an undecided centipede, proved to be a shell with its exercising crew. Then the fences got in the way, as usual, and the distant trees waltzed down, shutting out the view. Then there was a shriek from the engine and we had another glimpse, this time a flash of water, tremulous and tinted with sunset, blending in its bosom all the colors of to-morrow's contending crews — blue, green, red, and magenta. It is next to impossible to keep from writing finely on this subject. Indeed, some of the passengers were so much impressed as to put up their money on the staying color; but just then the trees waltzed up again, and we darted into Springfield, hot and dusty.

How marvelously quiet the town, and how decorous the beribboned crowd beyond. Even the hackmen did not shout. There was absolutely no sign of that feverish excitement that belongs to these occasions. Perhaps it was the weather, or some blessed influence of the mysterious Providence that refers all racing, wrestling, and trials of physical skill to the hottest season of the year; but there was also a pleasing absence of that unruly element whose outward and visible sign is hair-dye and diamonds, and whose speech is ejaculation. There was very little of color but in the

badges; there was nothing spectacular but the array of college athletes. The town went to bed quietly by 10 P.M.

No less notable for its propriety was the multitude that this afternoon thronged the river-banks, stretching along for two miles to the "finish" and its grand stand. Over the breadth of Long Meadow, a gentle, undulating plain, were scattered vehicles of every kind and age, and fringing the bank clusters of gayly dressed ladies, in all the bravery of their favorites' colors, looking at a little distance like parti-colored shells left by the receding tide. The colors were not always harmonious or effective; the depth of woman's constancy was shown by her noble self-abnegation in wearing the badge of fidelity, without reference to its consistency with her complexion or toilette. Harvard put the loyalty of the fair to its severest test — magenta. The majority of masculine spectators grouped themselves with that noble disregard of the picturesque which is so characteristic of the Anglo-saxon race, and patiently waited.

Of course there was the usual delay; it was utterly unmitigated in this instance by any of those reckless collaterals that are apt to distinguish a race or other great public gathering. The people walked about, smoked, and chatted; there were few side-shows; there was a mark at which a few credulous people shot with a toy rifle, but the well-regulated collegiate mind passed it by. At the grand stand there was thin ascetic lemonade hypocritically colored to a suggestion of impropriety, but no more. Even the prize package, without which no American is expected to enjoy himself, was absent, and yet, *mirabile dictu!* the people seemed to be happy, although the fact thereof was not proclaimed vociferously from the housetops. Nor did I discover any large-hearted Springfield citizen who felt called upon to bear witness to it by profanity, or prove it incontestable by a blow.

Presently, the clouds, which had gathered during my ride

to the "finish" put in an appearance with a few drops of rain that sent everybody to the carriages. Then there were cheers high up the river, that brought everybody to his feet and the bank again. It was the Freshman race; then we knew by the peculiar yell from the bank opposite that Yale was leading, and then there drifted across our perspective three centipedes — one with a suggestion of blue about it, whereby we knew Yale had won, and those of us who had been prudent enough to carry a variety of badges instantly displayed a blue, and looked satisfied. Yet there was but little enthusiasm. A few Harvard men — more, I think, because it was expected of them — said, "'Rah," repeatedly, and otherwise imitated, with more or less success, as their boat came by, the barking of a monotonous and not over-intelligent dog. But, somehow, we all accepted the result of the Freshman race as a logical conclusion, an effort of pure reason, in which only the intellectual faculties were engaged, and from which the feelings were entirely eliminated. And then we all waited, which was, after all, the real and abiding feature of the afternoon. We discussed sandwiches and the merit of the crews, and iced coffee, and the immortality of the soul, and, like the judge in "Maud Muller" looked at the sky and wondered whether the cloud in the west would bring foul weather. Then a shout on the opposite bank, whence a band had been playing a number of things, but nothing intelligibly, brought us all to our feet, with more or less well-simulated excitement. The great race was coming.

It came with a faint tumult, increasing along the opposite side into the roars of "'Rah," and yells of "Yale," like the Bore on the Hoogly River; and then, after straining our eyes to the uttermost, a chip — a toothpick — drifted into sight on the broad surface of the river. At this remarkable and utterly novel sight, we all went into *convulsions.* We were positive it was Harvard: we would

wager our very existence it was Yale: if there was anything that we were certain of it was Amherst and then the toothpick changed into a shadow, and we held our breath, and then into a centipede, and our pulses beat violently; and then into a mechanical toy, and we screamed; of course, it was Harvard — nearly two miles away, but we knew it. A few other protean shapes slipped across that shining disc, but our eyes were fastened on the first boat hugging the opposite shore; and yet, somehow, the great distance, the smallness of the object, and mayhap, a lingering doubt of the color, abstracted all human and vital interest from the scene. We hurrahed because it was the proper thing to do. We grew excited, and carefully felt our pulse while doing so; and then, suddenly and without warning, on shore and here at our very feet, dashed a boat the very realization of the dream of to-day — light, gracefully, beautifully handled, rapidly and palpably shooting ahead of its competitor on the opposite side. There was no mistake about it this time. Here was the magenta color, and a "'Rah" arose from our side that must have been heard at Cambridge, and then "Yale" on the other side, Yale, the undistinguishable, Yale, the unsuspected, Won!

AMERICAN HUMOR[1]

I AM aware that the magnitude of my title may seem somewhat ambitious for both performer and performance. I therefore hasten to say that I will assume at the outset that it is doubtful if there is any such thing as American humor of a nationally distinct intellectual quality. I fear, however, that I must borrow so much of that which has of late years been recognized as a form of national humor as to say that it "reminds me of a little story."

Some years ago I was riding on the box of a California stage-coach with a friend and the driver. As my fellow-passenger was a man of some literary attainment our conversation fell upon some of the early English humorists. After my friend had departed, the driver, who had taken no part in the conversation, asked me: "What were you talking about, sir, that made you laugh so much?" I informed him that the early English humorists had been the topic of conversation. "Well," said the driver, "judging by the way you laughed, I should have thought you were talking about some funny men." It was probable that my friend, the driver, occupied the position of a good many American and English writers who are inclined to accept modern extravagance, which is sufficiently characteristic of our people to be called national, as the true, genuine humor.

I will try to prove that our later American humorists are not so much purely American as they are modern; that they

[1] Lecture delivered in Farwell Hall, Chicago, Illinois, on December 10, 1874, and in Association Hall, New York, January 26, 1875. From *The Lectures of Bret Harte*, Brooklyn, 1909. Bret Harte's other lecture, "The Argonants of '49," is now printed, with some changes, as the Introduction to the second volume of his collected works.

stand in legitimate succession to their early English brethren, and that what is called the humor of a geographical section, is only the form or method of to-day. Sir Richard Steele, had he been born in the United States, would have developed into a "Danbury Newsman," and had Bailey been born in London and educated at Temple Bar in the time of Sir Richard Steele he would have described the humorous peculiarities of London just in the manner that that humorist did. The fashion of true humor has never changed; but if there is no true American humor, there is a true appreciation of humor. This is an epoch of curt speech, and magnetic telegraphs and independent thought, and wherever these conditions exist most powerfully, humorous literature will be found most embarrassed by them. But the humorist remains intact; he is simply an observer. I will go further and say that it is because the humorist is intact, because he is old-fashioned, because even in a republican country he is the most tremendous conservative and aristocrat — that it is because he is all this he is an observer.

Before the birth of its characteristic humor, American literature was even more ancient than contemporaneous literature in England. Even Irving tried to reproduce the old-fashioned style of the "Spectator" in his "Salmagundi."

I am quite ready to believe that the quick apprehension of some of my auditors will anticipate me with the suggestion that the Yankee dialect and character are the earliest expression of American humor. Unfortunately, however, for the theory of national humor, it was not a Yankee or American who first invented it or gave it a place in American literature. Even as we owe the characteristic title of Yankee to the cheap badinage of an English officer, so we are indebted to an Englishman for the first respectable figure that our Yankee cuts in American humor. It was to Judge Haliburton, of Her Britannic Majesty's North American *Colonies,* who first detected how much sagacity, dry

humor, and poetry were hidden under the grotesque cover of Sam Slick of Slickville, that the world first owed the birth of true American humor. Later on James Russell Lowell took up the work, but, at best, he only reproduced a type of life of a small section of the great American Union.

It is to the South and West that we really owe the creation and expression of that humor which is perhaps most characteristic of our lives and habits as a people. It was in the South, and among conditions of servitude and the habits of an inferior race, that there sprang up a humor and pathos as distinct, as original, as perfect and rare as any that ever flowered under the most beneficent circumstances of race and culture. It is a humor whose expression took a most ephemeral form — oral, rather than written. It abode with us, making us tolerant of a grievous wrong, and it will abide with us even when these conditions have passed away. It is singularly free from satire and unkind lines. It was simplicity itself. It touched all classes and conditions of men. Its simple pathos was recognized by the greatest English humorist that the world had known, and yet it has no place in enduring American literature. Even Topsy and Uncle Tom are dead. They were too much imbued with a political purpose to retain their place as a humorous creation.

Yet there are a few songs that will live when ambition's characters are dead. A few years ago there lived and died — too obscurely I am afraid for our reputation as critics — a young man who, more than any other American, seemed to have caught the characteristic quality of negro pathos and humor. Perhaps posterity will be more appreciative of his worth, and future generations who think of "The Old Folks at Home" will feel some touch of kindliness for the memory of Stephen C. Foster.

Now, as we approach our contemporary humorists, let us

pause for an examination of the forces which for the last twenty years have been shaping the humorous literature of the land. The character of these forces has entirely changed. The character of the press is different; all its pompous dignity and most of its acrimony are gone. The exigencies of news have stopped the stilted editorials, and the sagacious modern editor is well aware of the fact that it is a much easier and neater thing to stiletto a man with a line of solid minion than to knock him down with a column of leaded long primer.

One of the strongest points of modern journalism is its humorous local sallies. A young man, graduated, perhaps, from the "case," writes humorous items in the local column of his paper, which are read more and are better appreciated than all the rest of it, and the readers wonder who the rising humorist is who has appeared among them.

Brevity especially is the soul of California wit. For instance, the reply of "you bet," made by a San Francisco burglar to the "you get" of the householder who held a cocked "six-shooter" at his head. I might also add here the story of a notorious Californian gambler. During the funeral service the hearse-horses became restive and started off prematurely, with the rest of the mourners in pursuit. When the horses had been stopped and the last sad rites were concluded, the friends of the deceased wrote his widow a letter acquainting her with the fact that they had given her dead husband a good send-off, and that although the unpleasant occurrence, which they described, somewhat marred the solemnity of the occasion, it gave them a melancholy satisfaction to inform her that "the corpse won." This illustrates the humorous but irreverent style in which California newspaper men described events of the most serious nature.

If we are to take the criticisms of our English friends, *American humor* has at last blossomed on the dry stalk of *our national life*, and Artemus Ward is its perfect flower.

Personally, I fear there is a want of purpose in him. He never leads and is always on a line of popular sentiment or satire. The form of his spelling is purely mechanical. He gives the half-humorist slang of the people, the kind of expressions used in the stage-coach, the railway carriage, the barroom, or the village tap. If he did not gather, he at least gave public voice to them. He contributes no single figure to American literature but his own character of showman, and it is very doubtful if even that figure, respectable as it is, bears any real resemblance to any known American type.

The Civil War, which found him in the summit of his popularity, did not help him to any better results. To his nature the war was only an unpleasant and unnecessary bother. In fact, during this time his genius seems to have left him and fallen upon Orpheus C. Kerr and Petroleum V. Nasby, whose pictures of Southwestern life are unequaled for force and fidelity. Artemus Ward had the good-fellow humor of the story-teller, to whom a sympathizing audience and an absence of any moral questioning were essential to success. His success in England was a surprise to even his most ardent admirers. The personality of the man as a lecturer had much to do with his reception in England. He captivated average Englishmen by his cool disregard of them, his quiet audacity, and his complete ignoring of the traditions of the lecture-room. He wrote to me to say that the first night of his appearance it was a toss-up whether he would be arrested after the lecture or invited to dinner.

It would be hardly fair to look too closely into the secret of his popularity in England, yet if they were to settle the question of American humor, perhaps it would be well if we did. It was after the war. Englishmen were inclined to be friendly, and their good feeling had taken the form which their good feeling takes toward everything that is not British — condescending patronage. Criticism was blandly waived. Ward *made many* personal friends, and he was followed to

his grave in Kensal Green by some of the most distinguished men in the country.

To-day, among our latest American humorists, such as Josh Billings, the "Danbury Newsman," and Orpheus C. Kerr, Mark Twain stands alone as the most original humorist that America has yet produced. He alone is inimitable. Our line of humorists, it may be remarked, is a long one, but we cannot spare any of them yet. We need not, however, lessen our admiration for Lowell, Holmes, Irving, or Curtis. I do not think a perusal of "Innocents Abroad" will endanger the security of the "Sketch-Book." Perhaps, after all, there was a little too much fun. Laughter makes us doubly serious afterward, and we do not want to be humorists always, turning up like a prize-fighter at each round, still smiling.

If anything, the Americans are too prone to laugh, even over their misfortunes: they must not be serious no matter how grave the occasion. I will relate a story which is a good instance of this.

Some years ago, while riding alone through the Sierras, I lost my way. Suddenly I came across a dark-browed, heavily armed, suspicious-looking stranger, whom I would have avoided if possible, but as that was not to be done, I approached him and asked him the road to camp. The heavily armed stranger guided me to the spot, and beguiled the road with one or two very amusing stories, one of which he had just begun when the cross-road leading to the camp came into view. My guide accompanied me in order to finish his story, which was extremely humorous in its nature, to within a short distance of the camp, and then departed. On arriving among my friends I was astonished to find a sheriff's posse there in search of a noted desperado, whose description furnished by them identified him undoubtedly *with* the man who had, in order to finish his story, placed *himself within* one hundred yards of his deadly enemies.

Such was the American extreme. Perhaps our true humorist is yet to come: when he does come he will show that a nation which laughs so easily has still a great capacity for deep feeling, and he will, I think, be a little more serious than our present-day humorists.

THE IMPROVED ÆSOP

FOR INTELLIGENT MODERN CHILDREN

FABLE I

THE FOX AND THE GRAPES

A THIRSTY fox one day, in passing through a vineyard, noticed that the grapes were hanging in clusters from vines which were trained to such a height as to be out of his reach.

"Ah," said the fox, with a supercilious smile, "I've heard of this before. In the twelfth century an ordinary fox of average culture would have wasted his energy and strength in the vain attempt to reach yonder sour grapes. Thanks to my knowledge of vine culture, however, I at once observe that the great height and extent of the vine, the drain upon the sap through the increased number of tendrils and leaves must, of necessity, impoverish the grape, and render it unworthy the consideration of an intelligent animal. Not any for me, thank you." With these words he coughed slightly, and withdrew.

MORAL — This fable teaches us that an intelligent discretion and some botanical knowledge are of the greatest importance in grape culture.

FABLE II

THE FOX AND THE STORK

A FOX one day invited a stork to dinner, but provided for the entertainment only the first course, soup. This, being in a shallow dish, of course, the fox lapped up readily, *but the stork,* by means of his long bill, was unable to gain [redacted]*mouthful.*

"You do not seem fond of soup," said the fox, concealing a smile in his napkin. "Now it is one of my greatest weaknesses."

"You certainly seem to project yourself outside of a large quantity," said the stork, rising with some dignity, and examining his watch with considerable *empressement;* "but I have an appointment at eight o'clock, which I had forgotten. I must ask to be excused. *Au revoir.* By the way, dine with me to-morrow."

The fox assented, arrived at the appointed time, but found, as he had fully expected, nothing on the table but a single long-necked bottle, containing olives, which the stork was complacently extracting by the aid of his long bill.

"Why, you do not seem to eat anything," said the stork, with great naïveté, when he had finished the bottle.

"No," said the fox significantly; "I am waiting for the second course."

"What is that?" asked the stork blandly.

"Stork, stuffed with olives," shrieked the fox in a very pronounced manner, and instantly dispatched him.

MORAL — True hospitality obliges a host to sacrifice himself for his guests.

FABLE III

THE WOLF AND THE LAMB

A WOLF one day, drinking from a running stream, observed a lamb also drinking from the same stream at some distance from him.

"I have yet to learn," said the wolf, addressing the lamb with dignified severity, "what right you have to muddy the stream from which I am drinking."

"Your premises are incorrect," replied the lamb, with bland politeness, "for if you will take the trouble to examine *the current critically* you will observe that it flows from

you to me, and that any disturbance of sediment here would be, so far as you are concerned, entirely local."

"Possibly you are right," returned the wolf; "but if I am not mistaken, you are the person who, two years ago, used some influence against me at the primaries."

"Impossible," replied the lamb; "two years ago, I was not born."

"Ah! well," added the wolf composedly, "I am wrong again. But it must convince every intelligent person who has listened to this conversation that I am altogether insane, and consequently not responsible for my actions."

With this remark, he at once dispatched the lamb, and was triumphantly acquitted.

MORAL — This fable teaches us how erroneous may be the popular impression in regard to the distribution of alluvium and the formation of river deltas.

CONFUCIUS AND THE CHINESE CLASSICS

TRANSLATED BY KI-PO TAI

CHINESE COSMOGONY

In the beginning of the world, the world was Ktse Kiang, who died. His blood became rivers, his bones granite, his hair trees, etc., and finally, the insects which infested his body became people.

CONFUCIUS — HIS HABITS

In walking, the master usually put one foot before the other; when he rested, it was generally on both legs.

If, in walking, he came upon a stone, he would kick it out of his way; if it were too heavy, he would step over or around it.

Happening once to kick a large stone, he changed countenance.

The superior person wore his clothes in the ordinary manner, never putting his shoes upon his head nor his cap upon his feet.

He always kept the skirts of his robe before and behind evenly adjusted. He permitted not the unseemly exposure of his undergarment of linen at any time.

When he met his visitors, he rushed toward them with his arms open like wings.

HIS POETRY

The following was written in his sixty-fifth year, on leaving Loo: —

"Oh, I fain would still look toward Loo,
But this Kwei hill cuts off my view —
With an axe I will hew
This thicket all through
That obscures the clear prospect of Loo."

In later years the following was composed by his disciple Shun: —

"There once was a sage called Confu-
Cius, whose remarks were not few;
He said, 'I will hew
This blasted hill through,'
While his friends remarked quietly, 'Do.'"

HIS ETHICS

THE Master said, "One virtue goes a great way. In a jar of chow-chow, properly flavored with ginger, even a dead mouse is palatable."

On Wau asking him if it were proper to put dead mice in chow-chow, he replied, "It is the custom."

When he heard that Chang had beheaded an entire province, he remarked, "This is carrying things to an excess."

On being asked his opinion of impalement, he replied that "The *end* did not justify the means."

Hop Kee asked him how to tell the superior man. The Master replied, "How, indeed!"

The Duke Skang asked him one day, "What constitutes the State?" Confucius replied, "The question is asinine."

HIS JOKES

One day, being handed a two-foot rule, Confucius opened it the wrong way, whereupon it broke. The Master said, quietly, that, "it was a poor rule that would n't work both ways."

Observing that Wau Sing was much addicted to opium, the Master said, "Filial regard is always beautiful." "Why?" asked his disciples. "He loves his poppy," replied the Master, changing countenance.

"Is that Nankeen?" asked the great Mencius, as he carelessly examined the robe that enfolded the bosom of the fair Yau Sing. "No," replied the Master, calmly; "that 's *Pekin.*"

THE GREAT PATENT-OFFICE FIRE

On September 24, 1877, a disastrous fire occurred in the Patent Office at Washington, D.C. Sixty thousand models, many valuable papers, and part of the building were destroyed with a loss of over half a million dollars. Although the Government spent four hundred dollars a week for watchmen, nobody knew just when or where the fire started, and it had made great headway before the firemen arrived. Bret Harte was in Washington at this time and sent the following humorous "report" to the New York *Sun* of October 2, 1877.

"LOOK yar, stranger!"

The speaker was a Western man of quiet, self-possessed demeanor, and the grave, deliberate utterance of a man of varied experiences. The person spoken to was the gentlemanly doorkeeper of the Secretary of the Interior's own private office.

"There are positively no vacancies! All the Ohio positions are filled," said the doorkeeper, rapidly but courteously.

"I would like to say a word to the boss of this yar shanty."

"The Secretary, sir, is engaged in Civil Service Reform, and will continue to be until the next session. If you will give me your card, in the course of the next six months I think you will be able —"

"I was reck'nin' only to say to the boss, thet just now, bein' in among them thar models —"

"A patentee? Sir, certainly! I beg your pardon! — this way! this way. Here, Jo! Gen'lemen, patents!" And hurling the stranger into the arms of two stalwart messengers he instantly disappeared.

Hurried along violently down the passage, dragged up three flights of stairs, dashed headlong through a series of antechambers, the stranger, at last, gasped out to his guides:

"*What's up?* What's all this?"

"Civil Service Reform, sir! Economy, accuracy, dispatch! Take him, Jim, — easy there!" And he flung his gasping victim into the arms of a third messenger, who, grappling him, instantly bore him into the presence of a clerk in another department.

"Patents!" shrieked the man, and disappeared.

The clerk instantly seized the stranger as he staggered beside the desk.

"What number? what class? when applied for?"

"I was saying," gasped the stranger, that when I was lookin' at them two models — "

"Models? Which room, sir?"

"On this yar west side."

"Wrong side. D.K. West Division. Simpkins, Chief Clerk."

He was seized again, dragged downstairs, upstairs, but in the corridor managed by a herculean effort to break away from the guides. Seeing an open door, he entered. A gray-haired gentleman was writing at a table.

"See yar, stranger, jist a minit; I was downstairs, thar, and I was goin' to say — "

"One moment, sir," said the gray-haired gentleman, politely. He entered another room and a whispered consultation with several other clerks was distinctly audible. Returning and facing the stranger, he said: —

"I think you said you were about to say — "

"I was goin' to say — "

"One moment, sir. You have evidently mistaken the department. Cæsar Augustus, conduct this gentleman in a close carriage, to the State Department."

"But, look yar, stranger, about this yar — "

Before he could speak, however, he was seized in the robust arms of another messenger, and conveyed rapidly to *the State Department*.

"*I'm a stranger* yar in Washington," he managed to ex-

plain in the carriage, "and I suppose this yar is the right thing — though I rather calck'lated to ketch the 2.40 train to Cincinnati to-day — "

But the arrival of the carriage at the State Department, and the hurried exit of the messenger, after placing him in the elevator, stopped his explanation.

Once within the chaste, calm seclusion of the expansive building, he regained his composure, and found upon examination that he had lost only three buttons from his coat, and his watch. A decent solemnity, as of a pervading funeral in the halls, visible even in the voice and manner of the respectful attendant who met him, tended to still further increase his confidence. And when he entered the office of the chief clerk, and that grave and polite functionary approached him, apparently with a view of offering him his own pew, and giving him a nearer observation of the deceased, he was quite oppressed.

"I was about to say," began the Western man confusedly, "that if the corpse — that is — "

"I see," responded the chief clerk civilly, "you refer to the Secretary; but I regret to say he is, at present, absent. But permit me to show you to the First Assistant Secretary. William Henry, show the gentleman in."

On the threshold he was met by the First Assistant Secretary with gracious warmth. "I have heard of you, my dear sir, frequently; but," he added, as he grasped the hand of the stranger cordially, "I scarcely dared to hope that I would ever see you. God bless you, sir! Permit me to assist you in removing your yellow duster — a graceful garment, sir, but still one that, may I be permitted to say, does not entirely, so to speak, harmonize with the furniture in the room. This way, dear sir! You will find that chair comfortable. By placing your boots on *this* end of the desk — pardon me, perhaps you would like to remove them *entirely?* William Henry, take the gentleman's boots

and bring my own slippers. I hope your wife and family are well?"

"I was only reck'nin' to say—"

"Not a word more, sir,—not a word! I understand you, perfectly. You were referred to us as a person who 'was about to say.' Permit me, sir, to state that if there is a recognized function of this department, it is the function of being 'about to say.' '*What* to Say,' or '*How* it is to be Said,' is, of course, another matter. As a traveled man, as a man of the world, I see you understand me. I hope, sir, the chair is comfortable. God bless you, sir!"

"Well, I was reck'nin' to say that bein' in this yar model room, over yon, in the Patent Office—"

"An interesting spot—an exceedingly interesting spot, I am told," interrupted the Assistant Secretary courteously. "If I remain in Washington during the next twenty-five years, I shall endeavor—yes, I shall endeavor—to see it. At present, I wish it well. God bless you, sir! And your family, you say, are in perfect health?"

"Well, in this yar room I smelt smoke, and lookin', you know, sorter, kinder lookin' round, why, dern my skin ef I did n't find the whole shebang in a blaze!"

"While your expressions undoubtedly agree with your impressions," replied Mr. Seward, with a gentle smile, "and while they have, I admit, a certain degree of strength, perhaps inconsistent with the general theory of language in this department, might you not have been mistaken as to the central fact?"

"Which?" asked the stranger, doggedly.

"You have, my dear sir, undoubtedly mistaken the genial warmth of the greenhouse, perhaps the rays of the still fervent sun, for a conflagration."

"Why, dern it all!—the whole derned thing was a tinder box, and I saw—"

"*Permit* me—a single moment!" The Assistant Secre-

tary rose and gave a few instructions to a subordinate. As he did so the clangor of bells and the rattling of engines over the pavement of Pennsylvania Avenue came through the open window. The stranger rose excitedly.

"Thar! — did n't I tell you?"

The Assistant Secretary only smiled blandly. "Your inference is natural, yet, perhaps scarcely logical or diplomatic. In an experience of some years in the affairs of State, the tinkle of bells and the clatter of engines have not necessarily resulted in the destruction of the Patent Office by fire. Let us look at the thing largely. I think I can convince you of your mistake. I have placed myself in telegraphic communication with the Secretary of State, now at Nashville, and with Mr. Simpkins, Chief Clerk of the Patent Office models. Their several answers are already here," he added, as a messenger entered the room. This is from Mr. Evarts:—

"'Sir: The mere allegation of any irresponsible party or parties of any conflagration existing in any department of the Government, unless first sanctioned by the President or myself, cannot be received by you. Under the circumstances, however, it would be well to observe the allegator carefully; obtain, without compromising yourself, his views on the subject, and incidentally, on our Southern policy. You can use this dispatch as a joke or seriously, as the temper of the people may warrant.

"'EVARTS.

"'P.S. — I observe the omission of the prefix "Honorable" in the wording of my address. Hereafter always use it, without reference to the economy practised in the War Department. If funds are short, dismiss one of the clerks.'

"You observe, my dear sir," resumed the Assistant Secretary, "that I *am frank* with you. You see the cruel po-

sition in which I am placed. I cannot take any view — except a social one — of any fire that may occur at the Patent Office. Yet, perhaps, I may satisfy you as to the *facts*. This dispatch is from Simpkins, of the Patent Office: —

"'1.20 P.M. — Up to this moment I have received no official report of any fire existing in this department. On the contrary, a heavy rainstorm seems to be prevailing over my office. There is an elemental disturbance outside, and the floor is already flooded to the depth of six inches.

"'SIMPKINS, Chief Clerk.'"

"Then thar ain't any fire," said the stranger, disgustedly, rising to his feet.

"You may safely assure your friends," said the Assistant Secretary blandly, "that there is, *de jure*, no conflagration. God bless and protect you, sir, and give you a speedy return to your interesting family. If you are again in Washington, give me a call. William Henry! — the door."

"And I suppose I 'm a damned fool!"

"The State Department," said Mr. Seward, rising with gentle dignity, "never presumes to pass upon the mental qualifications of those who may seek advice, assistance, or information at its hands! God bless you, sir. Farewell."

An hour later, the Cincinnati express bore the stranger out of Washington. A fellow-passenger in the smoking-car called his attention to the cloud of smoke that was rising beyond the Capitol. "The Patent Office, they say, is on fire." Firmly, yet quietly, the stranger drew a revolver from his pocket: "I 'm kinder new in these yar parts," he said sadly, "and, mister, I 'm nat'rally a sorter hopeful, mindful man, easy to manage — *but* if ye 're trying to play *any o' them* Patent Office fires on me — Well — you hear *me?*"

Meanwhile the conflagration raged — quietly, unostentatiously! A clerk of the second class, exhibiting a coat, from which the tails had been slowly consumed while sitting with his back to the wall, and a young woman of the third class, saturated with water, and begging a permit to go home and change her clothes, produced at last a decided impression on the Assistant Secretary of the Interior. He proceeded, calmly and firmly, to the office of the Secretary.

"A conflagration, irregular, incendiary, and insubordinate, is now proceeding in the model room. It is true that there is no spot where a conflagration could take place but there, and it is, therefore, to some extent, consistent with the habits of the public service. Nor is it wholly without precedent. In 1835 the Patent Office was destroyed by fire."

"Thank God! it is the custom," interrupted Schurz.

"Owing," continued the Assistant Secretary calmly, "to the exertions of the Assistant Secretary who was badly burned, a greater part of the papers — "

"I fear I am keeping you," said the Secretary gently. "You are anxious, doubtless, to be at your post."

"— Were saved," continued the Assistant Secretary with dignity; "but it is to be regretted that the Secretary himself, in attempting to recover the waistcoat of George Washington from the devouring element, perished, miserably, in the flames."

"This is no time to consider precedents," shrieked the Secretary wildly. "We have Civil Service Reform which abolishes it! We must do something new."

"I regret to state, however," continued the Assistant Secretary calmly, "that an imprudent alarm has been already raised by outside, irresponsible parties, and that a disorderly mob of firemen — not in any way connected with this department — "

"Fatal mistake," said Schurz, clutching his hair. "I heard them *and thought it* was only a Sioux delegation outside."

"They have already introduced — and are now introducing — in the department, by the means of hose and water — "

"A Civil Service Reform not indorsed by me," screamed the Secretary, wildly dashing his eye-glasses on the floor. "This must be stopped! Put up a notice at once referring them to the Appointment Clerk."

"There is, I understand, already a reservoir of water, and considerable hose in the building," said the Assistant Secretary calmly, disregarding a stream of water from the one and one half inch nozzle of a hose, at that moment introduced into the window of the Secretary's office.

"Let there be a force of departmental firemen at once organized!"

"They have been, sir, but under your orders, since the fire, they have been *undergoing competitive examination* in room 97."

"Good! Thank God! we, at least, present a clear, unmistaken policy to the world!"

"Unfortunately," said the Assistant Secretary, — pausing only to pour the water, which now covered the marble floor to the depth of two inches, from his shoes, — "unfortunately two of the clerks escaped in the confusion."

"Great God!"

"'Mose Skinner,' who is accompanied by a confederate named 'Syksey,' is now on the roof directing the movements of the firemen. He is an appointee from Mr. Fish, and is below the grade. He spells traveller with a single 'l,' and omits the acute accent in 'dépôt' — in fact calls it 'deepot.'"

Mr. Schurz shuddered and gasped hoarsely, "We are lost!"

"'Jakey Keyser,'" continued the Assistant Secretary with perfect coolness, retreating behind a column to allow a stream of water from a two-inch nozzle to uninterruptedly wash the tall and commanding form of the Secretary, —

"'Jakey Keyser,' butcher, of Spring Garden, Philadelphia, originally intended for the clerical profession, on the first alarm dashed from the room, saved the papers of the Land Office, went back for Washington's sword and is now supposed to have perished in the ruins."

"Just Heaven! I thank thee," said the Secretary. "For only look at this record of Keyser's on the competitive examination. He called the Swiss 'Dutchmen,' and believes Switzerland a seaport on the Mediterranean."

The two men pressed each other's hands in mutual disgust, silently. Tears came to the eyes of two firemen — the only witnesses of this affecting interview, who happened to be climbing outside, in the smoke.

"Something must be done," said Schurz. "Issue another order regarding the voting of Ohio clerks, and contradict something in the newspapers."

"What shall I contradict?"

"Anything."

"We have still recourse to the telegraph."

"Good, telegraph Evarts, Key, and the President. Ask aid of the Fire Departments of San Francisco, Chicago and New Orleans! See that the Secretary of the Navy places an ironclad at Pensacola to bring up the Florida engines. Cut down the window-awnings. They obscure that view of the Interior Department which should, at such a crisis as this, be open to the world. Do they observe me from the street?"

"Yes!"

"Go, for the present. Enough! Where shall I find you?"

"At my post, sir!"

"Thank God! This is the result of discipline. Where is that?"

"On the corner of F and Seventh Streets. You will notice the letters on the lamp!"

"God bless you!" They fell into each other's arms. Strong men fainted, overcome with heat and emotion.

Meanwhile answers to the dispatches had been received. The first from the Secretary of State: —

"A dispatch evidently indicted by an inebriated employee of yours, and addressed to 'Bill Evarts, Champion Talkist of the Hayes Combination Troupe,' has been handed to me as proof of a fire alleged to be raging in the Patent Office. I can take no other notice of this, or other similarly addressed dispatches.

"EVARTS, WILLIAM, —— of State."

"Dismiss that clerk instantly," shrieked the Secretary.

"But he is now carrying your private papers from the office."

"Appoint some one to fill the vacancy."

"But he would have to go through competitive examination: that would take too long, and this man already speaks German, and knows how many moons Mars has."

The Secretary was mollified.

"Open the next dispatch."

It was from John Sherman: —

"In a public emergency like this it is always safe to dismiss a dozen clerks, and reduce the salaries of the remainder. The public want something, and the economy dodge always goes down. I have placed four additional buckets in the Treasury. They are fireproof, and will be of service in stowing papers and other valuables. I have issued orders that no one shall pass out until they or the building are consumed. An additional guard has been placed around the building outside to prevent the lowering of ropes, by *which, under the* thin disguise of saving life, iron safes con*taining valuables* might be concealed on the persons of the

so-called escaping victims. Any fire occurring in the Treasury after this date will be attributed to the newspapers.

"JOHN SHERMAN."

"Noble and thoughtful man," said Schurz.

The next dispatch was from the Secretary of the Navy: —

"Have ordered the 'Snickaree' ironclad to proceed to Washington and cover the Patent Office with her guns. If this don't subdue the conflagration, you can call upon the Marine Band and their instruments.

"THOMPSON."

"Open the next dispatch." It was from Key: —

"At any time during the late unpleasantness I would have cheerfully shown how best to burn up the Patent Office. I even had my eye on the Treasury also. But I 've reformed.

"KEY."

"We have not yet heard from the Department of Justice."

"Here is the dispatch, sir": —

"Don't be an ass! Leave the fire to the firemen. When they have put it out, make them a speech. You know the market price of that article.

"DEVENS."

"Order instantly everybody to report to me: form the several divisions into line in the west corridor. Telegraph Evarts to issue a proclamation; promulgate an order — "

"But, sir — "

"Say that Carl Schurz expects every man to do his duty — or *her duty*, if a female clerk. Reduce the salaries of

uttering it aloud by the fact that the host himself was that poet.

The other guest had playfully suggested that he should be my guide home in the midnight perils that might environ a stranger in Cambridge, and we dismissed the carriage, to walk the two miles that lay between our host's house on the river Charles and his own nearer the centre of this American university city. Although I had met him several times before in a brief week of gayety, until that evening I do not think I had clearly known him. I like to recall him at that moment, as he stood in the sharp moonlight of the snow-covered road; a dark mantle-like cloak hiding his evening dress, and a slouched felt hat covering his full, silver-like locks. The conventional gibus or chimney-pot would have been as intolerable on that wonderful brow as it would on a Greek statue, and I was thankful there was nothing to interrupt the artistic harmony of the most impressive vignette I ever beheld. I hope that the enthusiasm of a much younger man will be pardoned when I confess that the dominant feeling in my mind was an echo of one I had experienced a few weeks before, when I had penetrated Niagara at sunrise on a Sunday morning after a heavy snowfall and found that masterpiece unvisited, virgin to my tread, and my own footsteps the only track to the dizzy edge of Prospect Rock. I was to have the man I most revered alone with me for half an hour in the sympathetic and confidential stillness of the night. The only excuse I have for recording this enthusiasm is that the only man who might have been embarrassed by it never knew it, and was as sublimely unconscious as the waterfall.

I think I was at first moved by his voice. It was a very deep baritone without a trace of harshness, but veiled and reserved as if he never parted entirely from it, and with the abstraction of a soliloquy even in his most earnest moments. It was not melancholy, yet it suggested

one of his own fancies as it fell from his silver-fringed lips

> "Like the water's flow
> Under December's snow."

It was the voice that during our homeward walk flowed on with kindly criticism, gentle philosophy, picturesque illustration, and anecdote. As I was the stranger, he half earnestly, half jestingly kept up the rôle of guide, philosopher, and friend, and began an amiable review of the company we had just left. As it had comprised a few names, the greatest in American literature, science, and philosophy, I was struck with that generous contemporaneous appreciation which distinguished this Round Table, of whom no knight was more courtly and loving than my companion. It should be added that there was a vein of gentle playfulness in his comment, which scarcely could be called humor, an unbending of attitude rather than a different phase of thought or turn of sentiment; a relaxation from his ordinary philosophic earnestness and truthfulness. Readers will remember it in his playful patronage of the schoolmaster's sweetheart in the "Birds of Killingworth," —

> "Who was, as in a sonnet he had said,
> As pure as water, and as good as bread."

Yet no one had a quieter appreciation of humor, and his wonderful skill as a *raconteur*, and his opulence of memory, justified the saying of his friends, that "no one ever heard him tell an old story or repeat a new one."

Living always under the challenge of his own fame, and subject to that easy superficial criticism which consists in enforced comparison and rivalry, he never knew envy. Those who understood him will readily recognize his own picture in the felicitous praise intended for another, known as "The Poet," in the "Tales of a Wayside Inn," who

> "did not find his sleep less sweet
> *For music* in some neighboring street."

But if I was thus, most pleasantly because unostentatiously, reminded of the poet's personality, I was equally impressed with the local color of his poetry in the surrounding landscape. We passed the bridge where he had once stood at midnight, and saw, as he had seen, the moon

> "Like a golden goblet falling
> And sinking in the sea";

we saw, as Paul Revere once saw,

> "the gilded weathercock
> Swim in the moonlight";

and passing a plain Puritan church, whose uncompromising severity of style even the tender graces of the moon could not soften, I knew that it must have been own brother to the "meeting-house" at Lexington, where

> "windows, blank and bare,
> Gaze at him with a spectral glare,
> As if they already stood aghast,
> At the bloody work they would look upon."

Speaking of these spiritual suggestions in material things, I remember saying that I thought there must first be some actual resemblance, which unimaginative people must see before the poet could successfully use them. I instanced the case of his own description of a camel as being "weary" and "baring his teeth," and added that I had seen them throw such infinite weariness into that action after a day's journey as to set spectators yawning. He seemed surprised, so much so that I asked him if he had seen many — fully believing he had traveled in the desert. He replied simply, "No," that he had "only seen one once in the Jardin des Plantes." Yet in that brief moment he had noted a distinctive fact, which the larger experience of others fully corroborated.

We reached his house — fit goal for a brief journey *filled with historical* reminiscences, for it was one of the *old colonial* mansions, relics of a bygone age, still left

intact. A foreigner of great distinction had once dwelt there; later it had been the headquarters of General Washington. Stately only in its size and the liberality of its offices, it stood back from the street, guarded by the gaunt arms of venerable trees. We entered the spacious central hall, with no sound in the silent house but the ticking of that famous clock on the staircase — the clock whose "Forever — never! Never — forever!" has passed into poetic immortality. The keynote of association and individuality here given filled the house with its monotone; scarcely a room had not furnished a theme or a suggestion, found and recognized somewhere in the poet's song; where the room whose tiled hearth still bore the marks of the grounding of the heavy muskets of soldiery in the troublous times; the drawing-room still furnished as Washington had left it; the lower stairway, in whose roofed recess the poet himself had found a casket of love-letters which told a romance and intrigue of the past; or the poet's study, which stood at the right of the front door. It was here that the ghosts most gathered, and as my guide threw aside his mantle and drew an easy-chair to the fireside, he looked indeed the genius of the place. He had changed his evening dress for a dark velvet coat, against which his snowy beard and long flowing locks were strikingly relieved. It was the costume of one of his best photographs; the costume of an artist who without vanity would carry his taste even to the details of his dress. The firelight lit up this picturesque figure, gleamed on the "various spoils of various climes" gathered in the tasteful apartment, revealed the shadowy depths of the bookshelves, where the silent company, the living children of dead and gone poets, were ranged, and lost itself in the gusty curtains.

As we sat together the wind began its old song in the chimney, but with such weird compass and combination of notes that *it seemed* the call of a familiar spirit. "It is a

famous chimney," said the poet, leaning over the fire, "and has long borne a local reputation for its peculiar song. Ole Bull, sitting in your chair one night, caught it quite with his instrument."

Under the same overpowering domination of himself and his own personality, here as elsewhere, I could not help remembering how he himself had caught and transfigured not only its melody, but its message, in that most perfect of human reveries, "The Wind over the Chimney."

"But the night wind cries, 'Despair!
Those who walk with feet of air
Leave no long-enduring marks;
At God's forges incandescent
Mighty hammers beat incessant,
These are but the flying sparks.

"'Dust are all the hands that wrought;
Books are sepulchres of thought;
The dead laurels of the dead
Rustle for a moment only,
Like the withered leaves in lonely
Churchyards at some passing tread.'

"Suddenly the flame sinks down;
Sink the rumors of renown;
And alone the night wind drear
Clamors louder, wilder, vaguer, —
'Tis the brand of Meleager
Dying on the hearthstone here!'

"And I answer, — 'Though it be,
Why should that discomfort me?
No endeavor is in vain;
Its reward is in the doing,
And the rapture of pursuing
Is the prize the vanquished gain.'"

Why should not the ghosts gather here? Into this quaint historic house he had brought the poet's retentive memory filled with the spoils of foreign climes. He had built his nest with rare seeds, grasses, and often the stray feathers of other song birds gathered in his flight. Into it had come the great humanities of life, the bridal pro-

cession, the christening, death — death in a tragedy that wrapped those walls in flames, bore away the faithful young mother and left a gap in the band of "blue-eyed banditti" who used to climb the poet's chair. The keynote of that sublime resignation and tender philosophy which has overflowed so many hearts with pathetic endurance was struck here; it was no cold abstract sermon preached from an intellectual pulpit, but the daily lessons of experience, of chastened trial shaped into melodious thought. How could we help but reverence the instrument whose smitten chords had given forth such noble "Psalms of Life"?

Such is the picture conjured by his name. Near and more recent contact with him never dimmed its tender outlines. I like now to remember that I last saw him in the same quaint house, but with the glorious mellow autumnal setting of the New England year, and the rich, garnered fulness of his own ripe age. There was no suggestion of the end in his deep kind eyes, in his deep-veiled voice, or in his calm presence; characteristically it had been faintly voiced in his address to his classmates of fifty years before. He had borrowed the dying salutation of the gladiator in the Roman arena only to show that he expected death, but neither longed for it nor feared it.

A FEW WORDS ABOUT MR. LOWELL

Of the many spontaneous and critical tributes paid lately to the admirable gifts of James Russell Lowell, I recall but one where allusion was made to their early and prompt recognition by a contemporaneous public. Yet it was well known that he had never experienced the hesitating and probationary struggles of the literary life; that he had undergone none of the tentative trials of talent, and that, without exciting any of the perturbing effects of a literary comet, he was, nevertheless, as completely successful at the beginning of that brilliant career just closed as he was at its fullest finish. This was the more singular, since the performances of a political satirist, a didactic poet, a thoughtful and cultivated essayist do not usually secure that immediate popularity accorded to the latest humorist or story-teller. For, although Mr. Lowell had humor, it was subordinate to his controversial purpose, and, undoubted as was his lyric power, in his most stirring passages the moral effort was apt to be painfully and Puritanically obvious. But he was always popular, and I feel it is no mere loyalty to old impressions when I can remember that he was one of my *boyish* heroes as well as the admiration of my maturer years, for he belonged to us all in the "School Readers" of America, and the man who was stirred in later years by the war lyrics of 1864 could recall how his youthful pulse had been mysteriously thrilled by the then prophetic "When a deed is done for Freedom." Whatever ideal Mr. Lowell may have had in his own inner consciousness, — in spite of the *playful portrait* he has given of himself in the "Fable for *Critics*," — outwardly, at least, the work of his manhood

seemed to have fulfilled the ambition, as it had the *promise*, of his youth. A strong satirical singer, who at once won the applause of a people inclined to prefer sentiment and pathos in verse; an essayist who held his own beside such men as Emerson, Thoreau, and Holmes; an ironical biographer in the land of the historian of the Knickerbockers; and an unselfish, uncalculating patriot selected to represent a country where partisan politics and party service were too often the only test of fitness — this was his triumphant record. His death seems to have left no trust or belief of his admirers betrayed or disappointed. The critic has not yet risen to lament a wasted opportunity, to point out a misdirected talent, or to tell us that he expected more or less than Mr. Lowell gave! wonderful and rounded finish of an intellectual career.

Yet it has always seemed to me that his early success as well as his strength lay in his keen instinctive insight into the personal character of the New Englander. He had by no means created the "Yankee" in literature, neither had he been the first to use the Yankee dialect. Judge Haliburton, a writer of more unqualified English blood, had already drawn "Sam Slick," but it was the Yankee regarded from the "outside," — as he was wont to aggressively present himself to the neighboring "Blue Noses"; — and although the picture was not without occasional graceful and poetic touches, that poetry and grace was felt to be Judge Haliburton's rather than Sam Slick's. It may interest the curious reader to compare the pretty prose fancy of Sam Slick's dream with the genuine ring of "Hosea Biglow's Courtin'." Dr. Judd's "Margaret" — a novel, I fear, unknown to most Englishmen — was already a New England classic when Hosea Biglow was born. It was a dialect romance — so provincial as to be almost unintelligible to even the average American reader, but while it was painted with a coarse *Flemish fidelity, its* melodrama was conventional and im-

ported. It remained for Mr. Lowell alone to discover and portray the real Yankee — that wonderful evolution of the English Puritan, who had shaken off the forms and superstitions, the bigotry and intolerance, of religion, but never the deep consciousness of God. It was true that it was not only an allwise God, but a God singularly perspicacious of wily humanity; a God that you had "to get up early" to "take in"; a God who encouraged familiarity, who did not reveal Himself in vague thunders, nor answer out of a whirlwind of abstraction; who did not hold a whole race responsible — but "sent the bill" directly to the individual debtor. It was part of Mr. Lowell's art to contrast this rude working-Christian Biglow with the older-fashioned Puritan parson Wilbur, still wedded to his creed and his books. The delightful pedant is no less strong and characteristic than his protégé, though perhaps not as amusing and original, and there is always a faint reminiscence of the "Dominie" in literature whom we all remember in some shape or another! but to Mr. Lowell belongs the delightful conceit of making him the patron of the irreverent and revolutionary Hosea, who already usurped his functions as a moralist. Yet clever as was the "swaller-tailed talk" of the parson, one is conscious that it is mere workmanship, and that at best it is but humorous translation artistically done. It is the rude dialect of Hosea that is alone real and vital. For this is not the "Yankee talk" of tradition, of the story-books and the stage, — tricks of pronunciation, illiterate spelling, and epithet, — but the revelation of the character, faith, work, and even scenery of a people, in words more or less familiar, but always in startling and novel combination and figurative phrasing. New England rises before us, with its hard social life, its scant amusements, always sternly and pathetically conjoined with *religious, patriotic,* or political duty in the "meetings," "*training,*" or "*caucus*"; with its relentless climate mitigated

by those rare outbursts of graciousness that were like His special revelations; with the grim economy of living, the distrust of art which perhaps sent the people to the woods and fields for beauty; the human passion that asserted itself in a homely dramatic gesture; — these move and live again in honest Hosea's idiom. Without multiplying examples one may take that perfect crystallization of New England — the white winter idyll of "The Courtin'." In the first word the keynote of the Puritan life is struck: —

"*God* makes sech nights, all white an' still."

The familiar personal Deity is there — no pantheistic abstraction, conventional muse, nor wanton classic goddess, but the New Englander's Very God. Again and again through the verses of that matchless pastoral the religious chord is struck; weak human passion and grim piety walk hand-in-hand to its grave measure; to look at the pretty Huldy in her cozy kitchen was "kin' o' kingdom-come"; when, on Sunday, in the choir, Zekle "made Ole Hunderd ring, she *knowed* the Lord was nigher"; with *his* eyes on the cover of her "meetin'-bunnet," she blushes scarlet "right in prayer," and the loving but discreet pastoral closes with the assurance that

"They wuz cried
In meetin' come nex' Sunday."

Equally strong and true with the grim pathos of this courtship, mitigated by religious observances, are the few touches that discover the whole history of the Revolution and its "embattled farmers" in the "ole queen's-arm" over the chimney; that reveal the economic domestic life in the picture of the hard-working mother utilizing her discreet propinquity by "sprinklin' clo'es agin to-morrow's i'nin'" in the next room, and the fair Huldy herself dividing her blushes with "the apples she was peelin'." The hard, realistic *picture is lifted* into the highest poetry by two or

three exquisite similes — conceits that carry conviction because they are within the inventive capacity of the quaint narrator, and the outcome of his observation. Take such perfect examples as: —

"But long o' her his veins 'ould run
All crinkly like curled maple,
The side she brushed felt *full o' sun*
Ez a south slope in Ap'il.

. . . . . .

"All ways to once her feelins flew
Like sparks in burnt-up paper.

. . . . . .

"When Ma bimeby upon 'em slips,
Huldy sot pale ez ashes,
All kin' o' smily roun' the lips
And teary roun' the lashes.

"For she was jes' the quiet kind
Whose naturs never vary,
Like streams that keep a summer mind
Snowhid in Jenooary.

. . . . . .

"Then her red come back like the tide
Down to the Bay o' Fundy."

The last simile is the only one that might be thought inconsistent with the young farmer's capacity. But then the American schoolboy — inheritor of a vast continent — was always up in his geography — and for the matter of that in his natural phenomena, too.

As to the origin and genius of this wonderful dialect, Mr. Lowell has estopped criticism and inquiry with an essay that has exhausted the subject; it would be difficult to glean where he has reaped, and one does not care to refute his arguments, if one could. One is not concerned to know that much of the so-called dialect is Old English, and that among the other sturdy things the Puritan carried over with

him was the integrity of the language. Enough for us that it was the picturesque interpretation of the New England life and character. Critic of the New Englander as he was, he was first and last always one of them. Like Bramah he may have been the "Doubter and the Doubt," but he was also "the hymn the Brahmin sings."

But Mr. Lowell was more of an Englishman than an American — in the broadest significance of the latter term. His English blood had been unmixed for two generations, with the further English insulation of tradition, family, and locality. In the colonial homestead the initials "G. R." were still legible on the keystone of the chimney, and from what he has told us of his great-grandmother, it might have been also engraven on her heart — if a sentimental interest in Royalty were an uncommon weakness of the American woman. The family seem to have had none of those vicissitudes of fortune or restless ambition which compel the average American to "go West" or otherwise change his *habitat*. He knew little of the life and character of the West and South — it is to be feared that he never greatly understood or sympathized with either. His splendid anti-slavery services were the outcome of moral conviction, and not the result of a deliberate survey of the needs and policy of a nation. In his most powerful diatribes, there was always this reiteration of an abstract Right and Wrong that was quite as much the utterance of Exeter Hall as of Elmwood. Only once does a consideration of the other side occur, and that is a note of human compassion: —

> "My eyes cloud up for rain; my mouth
> Will take to twitchin' roun' the corners;
> I pity mothers too down South,
> For all they sot among the scorners."

But the whole instinct is as aggressive and uncompromising as the *ante-bellum* English expression had been, and an Englishman should find no difficulty in understand-

ing the burst of equally intense indignation which England's abandonment of that attitude excited in Mr. Lowell and was resented in "Jonathan to John." It was also this consciousness of his own integrity as a transplanted Englishman, who had kept the best traditions of the race, which made him unduly sensitive to English criticism and gave a wholesome bitterness to his manly protest to "A Certain Condescension to Foreigners." One does not care to be called "provincial" by one's own cousins for exhibiting the family traits more distinctly than they do, and Mr. Lowell's sensitiveness was English rather than American. The dwellers of the Great West and Northwest, who had quite as much at stake in this struggle for unity, and who had as freely contributed their blood and substance to its defense, were not shaken in their mountainous immobility, or ruffled in their lacustrine calm. Perhaps they were accustomed to it in the attitude which Puritan New England had already taken towards them.

The race that had been intolerant of Quakers and witches in colonial days were only inclined at best to a severe patronage or protectorate over the Gallic mixtures of the South and Gulf, with their horse-racing, dueling, and reprehensible recklessness of expenditure; over the German millions of the West and Middle States, slow and sure in their thoughtful citizenship, but given overmuch to wicked enjoyment of the Sabbath; the Irishman of the great seaboard and inland cities, developing the conservatism of wealth in his mature years, but perplexing and perturbing in his youthful immigration; the Spaniards of the Southwest and the Pacific Slope, gentle and dignified, full of an Old World courtesy unknown to the Atlantic States, but hopeless in their Latin superstitions and avowed Papistry. The microcosm of New England hardly reflected these puissant elements of the greater *world of the* Republic, and it is to be feared not always *rightly comprehended* them. When the New Englander

went to Kansas it was with a sharp rifle and a dogma, very much as his English ancestor had penetrated the wilderness. When he traveled for information the provincial instinct was still strong and he visited his capital — London. His literature confined itself mainly to the exploitation of local thought and character. With the exception of the Quaker Whittier, few of the New England writers had let their observations or fancy stray beyond its confines. Longfellow's "Hiawatha," the Western man knew only as a beautiful legend with Indian names and pictures from Catlin, but not as an American romance. It seems strange that Mr. Lowell, who has given us the following lines: —

> "Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
> Was prowled round by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
> An' who grew'st strong thru shifts an' wants an' pains,
> Nussed by stern men with empires in their brains,
> Who saw in vision their young Ishmel strain
> With each hard hand a vassal ocean's mane, —
> Thou skilled by Freedom an' by great events,
> To pitch new States ez Old-World men pitch tents," —

should have known so little of those "New States," or that now limitless circle before which the Indian has retired. But it was presumed that a sufficient idea of the country as an entity could have been evolved from the New Englander's inner consciousness itself, even as the secret of the wilderness was supposed to have been revealed to the soulful observer of Boston Common. I remember being startled by a remark of Mr. Emerson's as we were one day walking beside Walden Pond. It will be recollected that there the gifted Thoreau once reverted to nature, forswore civilization and taxes, and became a savage dweller in the wilderness. As I ventured to comment upon the singular contiguity of the village to what might be termed the fringe of this trackless solitude, the "Sage of Concord" turned to me with a sweet but peculiar smile. "Yes," he said, "we sometimes rang the dinner bell at the lower end of the garden and we

were always glad when Henry heard it and came up." Kind philosopher and discreet seeker of nature's primal truths! I don't mean to say that this facility of easy return to the conventional should ever be in the way of great divination, but I fancy I have since heard Mr. Emerson's dinner bell in a good deal of New England literature — and have felt relieved.

But if Mr. Lowell failed in a sympathetic understanding of the whole nation, who understood him and honestly mourn his loss, he never erred in his complete and keen perception of the section whose virtues and vices he portrayed. With his instincts as a true artist he knew that his best material lay at the roots of the people, close to the common soil, and with his instincts as a gentleman he heeded not the cry of "vulgarity" at his choice. We cannot be sufficiently grateful to him that he did not give us perfunctory, over-cultivated, self-conscious, epigrammatic heroes and heroines, as he might have done, and that his perfect critical faculty detected their unartistic quality, as his honest heart despised their sham. His other creative work had little local color, might have been written anywhere, and belonged to the varying moods of the accomplished singer and thinker, whether told in the delicate tenderness of the "First Snowfall," of "Auf Wiedersehen," and "After the Burial," or in the gentle cynicism of "Two Scenes from the Life of Blondel." His critical essays are so perfect in their literary quality that one forgets that they are or are not criticism.

It was a coincidence that, coming as we did, each from the extreme opposite shores of our continent, our official lot should be cast together in this country. It was a pleasant one to us both. But I find myself to-night somehow recalling the first time I met him under his roof-tree at Elmwood, when he came forward pleasantly to greet a countryman, who I fear, however, was to him as great an alien in ex-

perience, methods, and theories of his country as any foreigner who had enjoyed his hospitality.

I remember that near the house a gentle river sang itself away towards the sea. In that continent of mighty streams it was not, perhaps, as characteristic of the country as either of those great arteries that lie close to the backbone of the Republic, and form one vast highway for the people, for whose undivided and equal rights in it my friend and host lately battled with all the grace and vigor of his race; it was not as far-reaching as the larger rivers that ran east and west from the Rocky Mountains, and brought prosperity to either shore. But it ran under that marvelous bridge beneath whose arches Longfellow saw the moon sinking like "a golden goblet," and broadened and mirrored back the windows where Holmes still looked upon it and sang to it his sweetest songs. And the little "Charles" never bore more precious freight upon its bosom than when the last leaves of that transplanted English oak, which had grown up so sturdily among the elms of Elmwood, drifted out that August morning towards "the old home."

MY FAVORITE NOVELIST AND HIS BEST BOOK

As I have half a dozen favorite novelists, but only one favorite novel, I find some difficulty in adjusting this article to the limits defined in the above somewhat arbitrary title. And as it may be doubtful, also, if the critical dissection and analysis of any novel is compatible with that deep affection suggested by the word "favorite," I hasten to confess that my critical appreciation of *my* favorite novel began long after it had first thrilled me as a story.

And here, I fear I must start with the premises — open to some contention — that the primary function of the novel is to interest the reader in its *story* — in the progress of some well-developed plot to a well-defined climax, which may be either expected or unexpected by him. After this it may have a purpose or moral; may be pathetic, humorous, or felicitous in language; but it must first interest as a story.

The average novel reader is still a child in the desires of the imagination; he wants to know what "happened," and to what end. It may be doubted if the humor of Dickens, the satire of Thackeray, or the epigrammatic brilliancy of the French school, ever dazzled or diverted his mind from that requisite. "Did the lovers marry?" "Was the murderer discovered?" "Was the mystery explained?" are the eternal questions for which he demands an answer. The skill that prolongs this suspense, the art that protracts this dénouement without his perceiving it, he does not object to. Any one who has watched him eagerly or impatiently skipping page after page, and covertly peeping at the last page of a new novel, will understand this. We laugh at, but *we must not* underrate, the power of the weekly install-

ment of cheap fiction which leaves the hero hanging over a precipice in the last issue, and only rescues him on the following Saturday. It may be a cheap "surprise," but the humble "penny-a-liner" may be nearer to the needs of the average reader than the more celebrated author.

A charming American writer, in an extravaganza called "The Brick Moon," makes the solitary inhabitant of that whirling disk, cast into space, telegraph to his fair Dulcinea still on the earth. It was at the time when Charles Reade's exciting novel, "Foul Play," was in serial publication. The first question asked by the celestial voyager referred to this mundane romance, which they both were reading at the time of their separation.

"How did they get off the Island?" the anxious inquirer traces on his gigantic sphere.

"Ducks," flashed back the brief but sympathetic girl, with one eye at the telescope, and the other on the book.

The average reader will at least respond to the feeling that suggested so extreme an illustration. We, who write, may possibly object. We may wish him to admire our poetry, our humor, and our "profound knowledge of human nature" — *vide* our most intelligent critic; he will, in the exercise of that human nature, simply observe that he is getting "no forwarder" — and will have none of them. We may wish him to know of what our hero is thinking — he only cares for what he is *doing;* we may — more fatal error! — wish him to know of what *we* are thinking — and he calmly skips! We may scatter the flowers of our fancy in his way; like the old fox hunter in the story, he only hates "them stinkin' vi'lets" that lead him off the scent we have started. Action! Movement! He only seeks these, until the climax is "run down."

I am premising, of course, that this action shall be continuously and ably sustained. The subject may be various,

but I think it will be admitted that its most popular form is always based upon the prolonged struggle of man with his particular environment and circumstance. It was an old trick of the Greek, but the gods of *his* drama were implacable; the hero succumbed, and so we will have no more of him. In its simplest form, it was that direct struggle with the forces of nature which has made "Robinson Crusoe" immortal. This has been combined, later, with our hero's additional struggle with a preëngaged and unreciprocating mistress, as in "Foul Play"; although here is the danger of a double action, only one element of which the reader will follow. It may run the whole gamut of the affections, although the younger novelists — like Stanley Weyman — are beginning to recognize the effect of a lover who has to overcome a preliminary aversion on the part of his beloved in addition to his other struggles.

For the more hopeless the preliminary situation, and the greater the obstacles to the action, the greater the interest. The highest form of art is reached when the hero's difficulties are such that apparently nothing short of divine interposition would seem to save him, and his triumph is consequently exalted in the mind of the reader to seem to partake of divine retribution. It is especially reached in a novel dealing with what might be called personal revenge — yet a revenge for wrongs so inhuman, and a revenge carried out under such masterful intelligence and direction, as to seem divine justice.

And this is what I claim for *my* favorite novel: "The Count of Monte Cristo," by the elder Dumas. The lovers of that great French romancer will perhaps wonder why I hesitated at the outset to speak of him as my "favorite *novelist*"; they will perhaps remind me of his other books, and of those delightful creatures, Athos, Porthos, Aramis, and D'Artagnan; but I must in turn remind them that *these are only characters* in a charming series of historical

episodes; and I prefer to restrict my claim to his one exceptional performance — a perfect novel!

I suppose there is scarcely a reader of these pages who, whether he accepts this dictum or not, is not familiar with the story, and will not admit its whilom extraordinary popularity. "The wealth of Monte Cristo" is already as proverbial as that of Crœsus. Yet I venture to briefly recapitulate the outline of this story. A young man of obscure origin is, by a malicious conspiracy, unexpectedly deprived of his betrothed, his ambition, and his liberty, and confined in a political prison, where he is supposed by every one but the reader to have miserably died. At the end of fourteen years he reappears, equipped with extraordinary yet possible power of vengeance, and mysteriously pursues his former persecutors to the bitter end.

It is a plot simple enough, as all great works are; but before entering upon its marvelous exposition, I would like to call the reader's attention to that shrewd perception of human nature which made the great romancer select a very common instinct of humanity as the basis of his appeal to the reader's sympathy. We have all of us, at some time, when confronted with a particular phase of human wrong and injustice, been seized by a desire to usurp the tardy divine function, and take the law into our own hands. We have all wished to be "caliph for a day," as humanly, if not as humbly, as the Persian porter; we have longed for a sudden and potential elevation from which to hold the balance between man and man. Such a being Dumas has created in Edmond Dantès, later Count of Monte Cristo, and with such convincing and elaborate skill that we forget he is only redressing his own wrongs in the tact, wisdom, and scope of his scheme of retribution. We overlook the relentlessness of his punitive powers in the impassive logic with which he makes the guilty work out their own doom.

I do not know of a situation in romance more artistically explicated than the opening chapters of "Monte Cristo," from the arrival of Edmond Dantès at Marseilles to his incarceration in the Château d'If. There is nothing forced, extravagant, or unnatural in the exposition, yet it contains everything essential to the working-out of the plot in the remaining three fourths of the novel, all carefully prearranged — even to the apparently unimportant and humble vocation of the hero, as will be seen later. We have the good ship Pharaon entering the harbor, anxiously expected by the worthy owner Morrel, — a man whose generosity and extravagant sense of mercantile honor leads him eventually into financial straits, — and temporarily commanded by her first mate, Dantès, owing to the death, at sea, of her captain. We are at once introduced to the important characters of the book: Danglars, the supercargo, jealous of Dantès's position; Fernand, Dantès's unsuccessful rival for Mercedes's hand; Caderousse, the weak, drunken, vacillating friend of Dantès — a strongly drawn character; and the royalist magistrate, De Villefort, ambitious of promotion. We have for an epoch the coming shadow of the Hundred Days cast upon the Pharaon, for she also bears a letter from the Emperor at Elba to Noirtier, the Bonapartist uncle of De Villefort, which the innocent Dantès has received as a sacred trust from the dying captain. It is this letter, which would prove Dantès's innocence, yet, by compromising De Villefort's uncle, would ruin De Villefort's own political advancement, that the magistrate suppresses.

And here it will be seen that the conspiracy on which so much depends, and upon which such tremendous punishment is afterwards invoked, is no mere cheap stage villainy. The conspirators are human, and at this crisis — as in real life — are moved only through their respective weaknesses; Danglars by envy, Fernand by jealousy, Caderousse through *drunken impotence*. All believe in a certain *legal* guilt of

Dantès — except De Villefort — and none but he is aware that he is dooming the unfortunate sailor to more than a few months' imprisonment. Even De Villefort's cruel prolongation of his incarceration arises from the increasing danger of discovery to himself, in his rising fortunes. This combination has, therefore, nothing extravagant, inhuman, or unconvincing in its details. The conspiracy is successful, and the doors of the Château d'If close on the unfortunate man, and on the first act of the drama.

If, for a French novel, the love passages of Mercedes and Dantès seem somewhat brief and artificial, — especially when contrasted with the charming idyll of Maximilien Morrel and Valentine de Villefort in the later pages, — it is no doubt a part of the art of Dumas. He did not wish the reader to dwell too much upon it, nor to excite too much sympathy with Mercedes — who is destined, later, to take up with Dantès's rival. Dantès is always the central figure — not Dantès, a languishing lover, but Dantès, the victim of fate and selfish cruelty, the predestined self-avenger.

We now come to the second act of this drama; which is still explicatory and preparatory, yet which exhibits in a still higher degree the genius of the constructor. We have the hero with a tremendous purpose before him — but powerless, inexperienced, and untried. More than this, he is a common, uncultured man, while his persecutors are already advancing to fortune and position. It would be easy for the ordinary romancer to break prison walls, and let the convict revenge himself in a rude, sailor-like fashion. But Dumas is no ordinary romancer; he makes the fourteen years of Dantès's captivity essential to his salavation, and the actual equipment and education of the hero for his purpose. The whole thrilling narrative of Dantès's prison life, the despair verging upon suicide, the attempt to escape, *seemingly futile, yet* leading to his strange acquaintance

coup de théâtre, in which the curtain of the chapter descends without explanation. It is so unlike the author that one is inclined to believe it the work of Maquet, Dumas's collaborator in his other novels.

The episode of Luigi Vampa and his brigands is merely an *entr'acte* of adventure to bring closer the relation of Monte Cristo to Albert de Morcerf, the son of Fernand, and to prepare the way for Monte Cristo's entrance into Paris, and his work of retribution. Here, almost at once, we have the tremendously dramatic episode of the Auberge of Pont du Garde told by Bertuccio, Monte Cristo's servant, in which the diamond ring given by Monte Cristo (disguised as an abbé, and the executor of the dead Edmond Dantes) to Caderousse and his wife has provoked the murder of the jeweler and the death of the wife. The details of the murder, witnessed by Bertuccio himself in hiding; the "rain of blood" falling through the cracks of the floor above upon the concealed man, and his own arrest for the murder, would be thrilling enough as an episode, but it is more artistically significant as the beginning of that retribution worked out upon the old conspirators, through their own weaknesses, by the invisible hand of the Count. The discovery of the old intrigue of Mme. Danglars and De Villefort at Auteuil, and the birth of the child, is equally powerful as an episode; the Lucrezia Borgia habits of Mme. de Villefort, and the thwarting of her designs on the paralytic Noirtier by the fact that the powerful poisons she employs are, unknown to her, the same medicines given to him for his malady, and are therefore harmless to him; the luring of the financier Danglars to his ruin, through his ambition, by Monte Cristo, are thrilling incidents enough, but are one and all subservient to the dominant idea of the novel — that the guilty should assist in their own punishment.

Yet one of the finest touches in the story is Monte Cristo's final recognition that, with all his tremendous power, and

logical and impassive as is his scheme of retribution he has not for one moment succeeded in displacing God! And, despite its southern extravagance, its theatrical postures and climaxes, its opulence of incident, — almost as bewildering as the wealth of its hero, — as a magnificent conception of romance magnificently carried out, the novel seems to me to stand unsurpassed in literature.

But "Monte Cristo" is *romance*, and, as I am told, of a very antiquated type. I am informed by writers (not *readers*) that this is all wrong; that the world wants to know itself in all its sordid, material aspects, relieved only by occasional excursions into the domain of pathology and the contemplation of diseased and morbid types; that "the proper study of mankind is man" as he is, and not as he might be; and that it is very reprehensible to deceive him with fairy-tales, or to satisfy a longing that was in him when the first bard sang to him, or, in the gloom of his cave dwelling, when the first story-teller interested him in accounts of improbable beasts and men — with illustrations on bone. But I venture to believe that when Jones comes home from the city and takes up a book, he does not greatly care to read a faithful chronicle of his own doings; nor has Mrs. Jones freshened herself for his coming by seeking a transcript of her own uneventful day in the pages of her favorite novel. But if they have been lifted temporarily out of their commonplace surroundings and limited horizon by some specious tale of heroism, endeavor, wrongs redressed, and faith rewarded, and are inclined to look a little more hopefully to Jones's chances of promotion, or to Mrs. Jones's aunt's prospective legacy — why blame them or their novelist?

EARLY POEMS

1857–1865

THE VALENTINE[1]

(Bret Harte's first known poem)

'T WAS St. Valentine's day, and he mused in his chair,
His feet on the fender — but his heart was not there;

Thoughts of sweet Angelina, of all girls the best,
Fill'd his mind's waking dreams, and a sigh fill'd his breast.

What sound breaks the silence? — the doorbell's loud jingle —
The blood leaves his heart, his cheeks also tingle.

He rushed through the doorway, he jumps down the stair,
He opens the door, and the postman is there.

His ways are not pleasant — his words are but few;
"Mr. Jones?" "So I am!" "Here's a letter for you."

He seized the loved missive, and straightway he fled,
With his lips all the way pressed to Washington's head.

"Oh, my fond Angelina! — dear girl!" thus he cried;
"'T is from thee, my own darling, and maybe — my bride.

"Bashful girl! did'st thou think thy sweet hand to disguise
That no sign might reveal, and thy lover surprise?

"But love — fancy painter — more signs doth espy
Than the casual observer would idly pass by."

[1] *Golden Era*, March 1, 1857.

Thus spake he, then tore off the envious seal,
And impatiently read. What its contents reveal?

"*Dear Sir:*—The amount that stands charged to your name,
You 'd oblige us by calling and settling the same!"

LINES WRITTEN IN A PRAYER-BOOK[1]

THE last long knell of the tolling bell
Dies out of the belfry's pile,
And the rustling skirt and the crinoline's swell
Is gone from the echoing aisle,
And on saint and on sinner a silence fell,
Unbroken by whisper or smile.

I cannot pray, for my thoughts still stray
From my book, though I seem to con it;
She 's not over there 'midst beauty's array,
For I know the style of her bonnet,
Just from Madame Chassez's, with its trimming so gay;
And the loveliest roses upon it.

She comes! "She is like to the merchant ships,"
For she bringeth her silks "from afar";
She comes! She is here! and my heart 's at my lips,
And my nerves, how they tremble and jar!
For the flounces that catch in the pews and the slips,
Her way to salvation doth bar.

Oh, let not your judgment, ye saints, be severe,
Impute not the fault to her pride,

[1] *Golden Era*, March 22, 1857.

For when angels awhile on the earth reappear,
Their limits are not circumscribed;
And when woman extendeth the bounds of her sphere,
Her influence can't be too wide!

LOVE AND PHYSIC[1]

A CLEVER man was Dr. Digg;
Misfortunes well he bore;
He never lost his patience till
He had no patients more;
And though his practice once was large,
It did not swell his gains;
The pains he labored for were but
The labor for his pains.

The "art is long," his cash got short,
And well might Galen dread it,
For who will trust a name unknown
When merit gets no credit?
To marry seemed the only way
To ease his mind of trouble;
Misfortunes never singly come,
And misery made him double.

He had a patient, rich and fair,
That hearts by scores was breaking,
And as he once had felt her wrist,
He thought her hand of taking;
But what the law makes strangers do,
Did strike his comprehension;
Who live in these United States,
Do first declare intention.

[1] *Golden Era*, April 12, 1857.

And so he called. His beating heart
With anxious fears was swelling,
And half in habit took her hand
And on her tongue was dwelling;
But thrice tho' he essayed to speak,
He stopp'd, and stuck, and blundered;
For say, what mortal could be cool
Whose pulse was most a hundred?

"Madam," at last he faltered out,—
His love had grown courageous,—
"I have discerned a new complaint,
I hope to prove contagious;
And when the symptoms I relate,
And show its diagnosis,
Ah, let me hope from those dear lips,
Some favorable prognosis.

"This done," he cries, "let's tie those ties
Which none but death can sever;
Since 'like cures like,' I do infer
That love cures love, forever."
He paused — she blushed; however strange
It seems on first perusal,
Altho' there was no promise made,
She gave him a refusal.

Says she, "If well I understand
The sentiments you 're saying,
You do propose to take a hand —
A game that two are playing —
At whist; one's partner ought to be
As silent as a mummy,
But in the game of love, I think,
I shall not take a dummy.

"I cannot marry one who lives
By other folks' distresses;
The man I marry, I must love,
Nor fear his fond caresses;
For who, whatever be their sex,
However strange the case is,
Would like to have a doctor's bill
Stuck up into their faces?"

Perhaps you think, 'twixt love and rage,
He took some deadly potion,
Or with his lancet breathed a vein
To ease his pulse's motion.
To guess the vent of his despair,
The wisest one might miss it;
He reached his office — then and there
He charged her for the visit!

THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH[1]

(After Longfellow)

STARING sunlight on the lawn,
Chequered shadows in the wood;
Summer's odors, idly borne,
Linger by the trickling flood.

Lingering, waiting, long delayed,
Till the pure and limpid pool
Mirrors, with night's coming shade,
Childhood tripping home from school.

Tripping down the well-worn track,
Zephyrs greet the coming girl,
Press the little bonnet back,
Nestle in the dewy curl.

[1] *Golden Era*, April 26, 1857.

Robins twittering thro' the leaves,
Chirping wren and chattering jay
Carol 'neath the verdant eaves;
Carols she as sweet as they.

Satchel swinging on her arm,
On her cheek health's glowing flush,
Stands, in all of girlhood's charms,
Youth beside the alder-bush.

Summers nine had o'er her fled,
Left their violets in her eyes,
On her cheeks their roses spread,
On her lips their balmy sighs.

On the grass her bonnet lies,
On the grass her satchel flung;
Who its secrets may surmise?
Rosy fingers grope among

Remnants of her dinner there —
Dinner past, but not forgot;
Dimpled hand with tender care
Draws the bread and butter out.

White and bare that arm and hand,
And beneath the rippling stream,
Like two pebbles on the strand,
White the little ankles gleam.

Leaning o'er the waters clear,
Looking in the limpid spring
Sees she there her cheeks appear —
Sees her blue eyes glistening?

Crimson clouds and skies of blue,
Morn and eve had mirror'd there;
But those eyes and cheeks to view
With their tints, might well compare.

Breathless lie her lips apart,
Motionless her arms incline,
Wildly beats that little heart —
Ah! the child was feminine.

Yes, the curse of Eve the mother —
Woman's vanity — the spell
On her falls, and eke another,
Down the bread and butter fell.

On the waters had she cast it:
By and by it might be found.
Foolish hand forgot to clasp it —
Let it fall upon the ground.

Such is fate; and though we mutter,
Why and wherefore? none decide.
Ever falls one's bread and butter,
Always on the buttered side?

With her sorrows let us leave her —
Great her fault, let justice own;
Great her punishment — nor grieve her
With the chastening to come.

Learning well this moral lesson:
Though our visions still are fair,
Humblest things in our possession
Greater than illusions are.

THE STUDENT'S DREAM[1]

"KNOWLEDGE IS POWER"

A STUDENT sat in his easy-chair;
Around him many a pond'rous tome
Of antiquarian lore was there,
And the classic wealth of Greece and Rome.
The light that swings 'twixt the oaken beams,
Around and about him fitfully gleams
In a pale prophetic shower;
And the line on which he ponders and dreams,
Is written — "Knowledge is Power."

He dreams — his vision expansive grows,
And on either side the wall recedes,
And from out that misty chaos rose
A pile of mortgages, bonds, and deeds,
And gold in glittering columns heaped.
A nation's debt might be reclaimed,
A nation's honor be sustained,
Or countries might in blood be steeped
At the pen-and-ink stroke of this mighty lord
Of Mammon, who sat by his treasured hoard.

But the vision fled as he raised his head;
He shrugged his shoulders, and, muttering, said:
"Riches will change — they flee in an hour;
To know, is eternal — 'Knowledge is Power.'"

He bow'd his head in his book again,
And sighed, but it was not a sigh of pain.
Was it an echo that, lingering nigh,
Caught and repeated that long-drawn sigh?

[1] *Golden Era*, June 7, 1857.

Or was it the lady sitting by?
Oh, she was fair! — her presence there
Suddenly, sweetly filled the air
Like the scent of some opening flower rare,
And Heaven was in her eye;
Or such a glimpse as might have slid
From under the tenderly guarded lid,
Had none been there to spy.
In the lap of her satin robe, she bore
Of gems and jewels a precious store,
For all that lavish wealth might spare,
At beauty's shrine but offerings were.

But the vision fled as he raised his head;
He watched her departing, and sighing, said:
"Beauty is bought — it fades like a flower;
Who can buy knowledge? — 'Knowledge is Power.'"

In a robe antique, and of mien profound,
Came a well-known face his own to greet,
And he knew the pale brow that the laurel bound
Was the sacred symbol of knowledge meet.
In her eyes the ray of a soul divine
Glowed like a gem in the pale moonshine
With a radiance constant, quiet, and sweet.
Her stature was slight, majestic and tall,
Yet proudly erect she towered, withal,
To homage used, for she knew that all
The world was at her feet;
Yet a silence kept as the student slept,
And nearer she drew; by his side she stept;
She spoke, and as clear her accents rung
As a silver bell or an angel's tongue.
He woke with a start, for his secret heart
Felt that which bade all his dreams depart.

"Neophyte, dreamer, slumberer, fool!
Wouldst measure my power by musty rule?
Or, say, dost thou seek what thou 'lt hardly own,
The Alchemist's prize, or Philosopher's stone?
For 't is not in sophist's or sage's thought,
Is the mighty power of knowledge wrought;
It is seen in the practiced deed,
Not of musty scrolls, but of living men;
The hearts, the passions, the motives ye ken,
Should thy knowledge be, and its 'power' then
Can turn them to thy need;
For money is mighty, money is power,
And beauty is strong in camp and bower;
But money 's the proof that knowledge is power,
And beauty its slave, indeed;
And, remember, that knowledge all alone
May still be a fatal dower,
And the strongest lever the world has known
Is where beauty 's the *might* that 's to be shown,
And gold 's the *prop* that all may own,
And 'knowledge is the *power!*'"

THE HOMESTEAD BARN[1]

Past dreams of bliss our lives contain,
And slight the chords that still retain
A heart estranged to joys again,
To scenes by memory's silver chain
Close-linked, and ever yet apart,
That like the vine, whose tendrils young
Around some fostering branch have clung,
Grown with its growth, as tho' it sprung
From one united heart.

[1] *Golden Era*, June 21, 1857.

I think of days long gone before,
When, by a spreading sycamore,
Stood, in the happy days of yore,
Low-roofed, broad-gabled, crannied door,
The homestead barn, where free from harm,
In shadowy eaves the swallow built,
In darkened loft the owlet dwelt;
Secure lived innocence and guilt
Within its sacred charm.

By cobwebbed beams and rafters high
I 've sat and watched the April sky,
And saw the fleecy *cirrus* fly,
Sunlight and shadow hurrying by,
Chased by the glittering rain;
Then shrunk to hear the pattering tread
Of unseen feet above my head,
Filled with a strange and wondering dread,
Till sunlight smiled again.

And, oh! those long, those summer days,
The morning's glow, the noontide's blaze,
Or when the just declining rays,
Half shorn, mixed with the mellowing haze,
And distant hills were veiled in gray;
From newmown hay, with odors sweet,
I 've watched the lowly bending wheat
Droop lower in the yellow heat
The lazy, livelong day.

Those summer days too quickly fled,
And my youth's summers early sped;
Yet when my "sere" of life is shed,
I would were mine such harvest spread
Within that barn of autumn born,

That many a tale of summer told,
Where golden corn and pumpkins rolled,
And apples, that might scarcely hold
The goddess' fabled horn;

When springtime brought each feathered pair,
When summer came with scented air,
When autumn's fruits rolled fresh and fair,
Or winter's store brought back the year,
The treasured sweets it multiplies;
And now at home, at eve appear
The homestead barn, to me so dear;
I would I read my right as clear
"To mansions in the skies."

TRYSTING[1]

"Down at the turn of the road
Wait for me, dearest, at eight!"
Here, at the turn of the road,
I loiter, and linger, and wait.

I was here when the flickering day
Went out in a lingering flame;
I was here in the twilight gray,
And the stars have come since I came.

From the wooded crest of the hill
Orion looks over the lea,
And Cetus is glimmering still
In a purple and crimson sea.

And the Pleiads — all but the one,
Withdrawn in her maidenly shame

[1] *Golden Era*, June 28, 1857.

For the love that a mortal won —
Are here, and you should be the same.

She comes not! I turn to the right,
And the white road dips in the gloom;
She comes not! the left to my sight
Is silent and dark as the tomb.

Those tender palms on my eyes?
Those slender arms round me thrown?
Cupid, you cannot disguise
Those rosy lips at my own!

Here, at the turn of the road!
"Forgive me, my love, if I 'm late!"
Down at the turn of the road,
Cupid, oh! who would n't wait?

"THE FOG BELL"[1]

A DEEP bell is knolling
Over the sea,
Rolling and tolling
Over the sea;
Lazily swinging,
Steadily bringing
Tidings of terror,
Danger is bringing,
All the while solemnly,
Mournfully singing:

"Fogs on the sand-bank,"
Fogs on the deep,

[1] *Golden Era*, September 27, 1857.

Fogs round the gallant ship
  Stealthily creep;
Fogs on the forecastle,
  Quarter and waist,
Fog in the binnacle,
  Fog in each place;

Fog in the country,
  Fog on the moor,
On the green upland,
  On the white shore;
Fog in the marshes,
  Fog in the brake,
Upon the river,
  Over the lake.

Fog in the city,
  In the broad street —
There want and luxury
  Heedlessly meet;
Fog in the narrow lane,
  In the dark way —
There shines the light of truth
  Never a ray.

Fog in the haunts of crime —
  Vice and despair;
Fog in the Justice seat
  Denser than there;
Fog in the capitol,
  Where in the hall
Grave legislators meet —
  Fogs over all.

Fog in the miser's heart,
  Dark'ning and drear;

Fog that, in pity's eye,
Melts to a tear;
Things that delusively
In the fogs loom,
Men still unceasingly
Grope for in gloom.

Fog in the country,
Fog on the deep,
Fogs in the city
Stealthily creep;
Darkness around us,
Darker, in sooth,
Were there no heavenly
Sunlight and truth.

"JESSIE"[1]

SHE is tripping, she is tripping
Down the green and shady lane,
And each footstep's like the dripping
Of the early April rain.
As she passes, fragrant grasses,
Blooming flowers spring up again
Where her dainty footprint presses,
As from early April rain.

Oh, the blessed, oft caressed,
Flowing, glowing, auburn tresses,
Or the fairy shape impressed
In the gracefullest of dresses;
To behold her, is to fold her
To your heart in puzzled bliss,

[1] *Golden Era*, October 11, 1857.

Whether still to wish her older
Or that she were always this.

Gentle Jessie! Heaven bless ye,
From your slipper's dainty toe
To the jaunty, canty, dressy
Little flat's most killing bow!
Would kind Heaven power had given
Me the proper path to show
Those retreating footsteps, even
Guiding them the way to go.

"DOLORES" [1]

SEVILLE's towers are worn and old;
Seville's towers are gray and gold:
Saffron, purple, and orange dyes,
Meet at the edge of her sunset skies:
Bright are Seville's maidens' eyes,
Gay the cavalier's guitar:
Music, laughter, low replies,
Intermingling; and afar,
Over the hill, over the dell,
Soft and low: Adagio!
Comes the knell of the vesper-bell,
Solemnly and slow.

Hooded nun, at the convent wall,
Where the purple vines their tendrils throw,
Lingering, looking, wouldst recall
Aught of this giddy scene below?
Turn that pensive glance on high:
Seest thou the floods in yon blessed sky,

[1] *The Knickerbocker*, or *New-York Monthly Magazine*, January, 1858.

LINGERING, LOOKING, WOULDST RECALL
AUGHT OF THIS GIDDY SCENE BELOW?

ELISE[1]

LINES WRITTEN IN AN ALBUM; CIRCA 1858

A ROSE — thrown on the drifting tide
That laughs along the tinkling brook, —
Tho' here and there it idly glide,
Finds rest within some sheltered nook:

And thus some heart tossed on the stream
Of time — impelled by passion's breeze
And folly's breath — may find a dream
Of hope — upon thy breast, — Elise!

THE BAILIE O' PERTH[2]

(Bret Harte's first dialect poem)

THE Bailie o' Perth was a blithesome mon,
And a blithesome mon was he,
And his gude wife lov'd him well and true,
And the bailie he lov'd she;
Yet mickle or muckle the cause or kind,
Whatever the pother be,
Be it simple sair or unco deep,
The twain could never agree.

Syne spake the bailie with blithesome mind,
Fair and soft spake he:
"Twal lang year hae we married been,
Yet we can never agree.
Now, my ain sweet love, let us try for aye,
Forever and aye to see

[1] *Overland Monthly*, September, 1902.
[2] *Golden Era*, December 12, 1858.

If for ain blest time in all our life,
You and I can ever agree.

"Now listen to me: should it chance that ye
Were paidlint in the lane,
Ye should meet a bonnie buxom lass,
And a winsome laddie, twain,
Wha wad ye kiss, good dame?" he said,
"Wha wad ye kiss?" said he;
"Wad ye kiss the bonnie buxom lass,
Or the winsome gay laddie?"

"Hoot awa, mon! are ye ganging daft?
Are ye ganging daft?" said she;
"Twal lang year hae we married been,
And I have been true to ye;
Mon hae never my twa lips touched,
Nae mon hae glinted at me."
"But wha wad ye kiss, good dame?" said he;
"I wad kiss the lass," said she.

Out laughed the bailie with muckle glee,
For a blithesome mon was he;
"Twal lang year hae we married been,
And now for ainst we agree;
If ye met a lad and a buxom lass
Down in the gowans fine,
To kiss the lass wad be your choice,
And I ken it wad be mine!"

QUESTION[1]

When I meet her little figure,
Simple, guileless little figure,

[1] *Golden Era*, June 17, 1860.

With its graceful crest that tosses
Up and down the flowing sea,
Does she dream that all above her —
All around her — still must love her,
Just as I do? Does she ever
Look at me?

When the sunset's flush is on her,
Do her fancies ever wander,
Do her girlish fancies ever
Mingle with the flowing sea?
In her tender meditation,
In her mystic speculation,
Is there any lonely figure
Just like me?

When she took the flowers I sent her —
Sent in secret — sent in longing;
And all, all, except the daisy,
Tossed them on the flowing sea;
When she placed that happy flower
On her bosom's trembling dower,
Now I wonder did she ever
Think of me?

Hush, my heart. She's coming, coming;
Loud above the city's humming,
I can hear her footfall's beating,
With the ever flowing sea.
Rosy red — a flush is on her,
As she passes — have I won her?
Eros! help me — I am sinking
In the ever flowing sea.

LETHE [1]

STANZAS FOR MUSIC

I

Love once sat by a willow shade,
That grew by a fabled river;
His bow unstrung, by his side he laid,
And hung up his classic quiver.
Love then cried;
"Ye who've sighed,
For passion unrequited —
In this flood
Love's young bud,
Plunged — is ever blighted!"

II

There came a maid to the willow shade,
Her heart with passion swelling;
A hopeless love on her sweet cheek preyed
In her breast a deep grief dwelling.
But, oh, think!
On the brink,
Lingered that sad daughter;
While her fair
Graces rare,
Mirrored back the water.

III

From her cheeks she parts each tress,
Proudly back she threw them;
Crimson tints her cheeks confess,
As she paused to view them.

[1] *Golden Era*, July 1, 1860.

"Is it meet
One so sweet,
In that gloomy river —
Plunge for love?
Saints above!
Ugh! It makes me shiver!"

MIDAS' WOOING[1]

MIDAS woos with coach and pair,
Midas woos with princely air,
Midas sits within in state,
But another 's at the gate.

What cares Midas who waits there,
Kate 's within and Kate is fair,
Young and lively: that is well,
Has she got a heart to sell?

Kate can sing if she but try,
She might, were another by;
Katie sings a lover's air,
Will she find an echo there?

Kate plays best of all the girls,
Katie plays the "Shower of Pearls,"
Some one in that witching hour,
Thinks of Jove, and Danaë's shower.

From above the hawthorn bush,
Peeps the moon and wakes the thrush,
Bird and moon and music grate,
Like the hinges on the gate.

[1] *Golden Era*, August 26, 1860.

Midas rises — takes his cane,
"Will be proud to call again."
Off goes Midas. Off goes Kate;
Two stand at the garden gate.

THE WRECKER [1]

(From a Painting)

"Ho, Mark and Will! What, shirking men!
Why do ye loiter along the sand, —
Twiddling your thumbs and idling, when
So brave a cargo bestrews the land?
Lend a hand to this bale of spice
Fragrant as breezes from India's shore,
And this oaken chest that buried lies
I warrant, with dollars a precious store.

"You tell me she was a noble ship!
And a noble cargo she cast away;
And the Captain thought of a lucky trip —
And the crew — they all were lost, you say?
'T is a blessed wreck, for I dreamt this night
That my daughter Nan, with her looks of grace,
She that fled from her father's sight,
Stood by my hammock, face to face.

"And I knew that I yet might hoard and save
Enough to follow her some fair day;
It was God who sent a barque so brave —
May he shrive the souls that were cast away,
Then haste ye, men — why do ye stare?
Why do ye turn your eyes from mine?
Why do you gaze at the open air?
At the land, at the beacon and flashing brine!"

[1] *Golden Era*, September 9, 1860.

"Master! The waves were wild to-night
And ran like wolves on the smooth white beach,
And broke with a roar on the rocky bight,
And swept to the cliffs in their length'ning reach.
And she struck, d' ye see, upon 'Devils Back,'
And in less than the turn of a glass was gone
And I heard her spars and timbers crack
Over the sea and the whistling storm.

"And we saw, — 'twas Bill and I stood here —
A great wave come to the lab'ring ship
As she thumped and struggled as though in fear —
But it caught her up like a cooper's chip
And then there was naught but the boiling surge,
And the hissing water — but soon to view
A speck seemed borne to the glimmery verge
Of the rocky bight — and Bill saw it too.

"So we ran — Bill and I — and Bill dashed out
With a line that I held, slung around his waist,
And thrice he rolled over and bobbed about
And thrice he brought up at the selfsame place.
He 'll tell you so, Master, — 't was not his fault,
If after he struggled an hour there,
He only caught something — 't was damp and salt,
And dragged it out by its long fair hair.

"But we laid it afterward on the sand,
Take my arm, Master, I 'll show you what."
They led him down on the cold white sand
And up to a quiet and sheltered spot,
And there by the billows, and beacon's light,
Again he was standing face to face,
As he stood in a dream on that stormy night,
With his daughter Nan and her look of grace.

BY THE SAD SEA WAVES[1]

I WAS walking down on the sands one night
With the girl of my choice — the woman I loved;
And I picked up a shell on the pebbly strand,
And thought even thus shall my love be prov'd:

"Take this, dearest girl, for 't is like to me,"
Said I with a gesture of fond entreat;
"'Tis a stranger come from the changing sea
To languish and die at thy own dear feet!"

She looked in my face in her scornful glee,
While her dainty foot beat the cold white sand,
"I will take the shell, but not you," said she;
"He offers his house, you only your hand!"

EFFIE[2]

EFFIE is both young and fair,
Dewy eyes and sunny hair;
Sunny hair and dewy eyes
Are not where her beauty lies.

Effie is both fond and true,
Heart of gold and will of yew;
Will of yew and heart of gold —
Still her charms are scarcely told.

[1] *Golden Era*, October 7, 1860.

[2] This poem originally appeared in the *Golden Era*. It was later published in *St. Nicholas Magazine*, with the name changed to Jessie, and afterward set to music under that title by Leopold Damrosch, and also by N. H. Allen.

If she yet remain unsung,
Pretty, constant, docile, young,
What remains not here compiled?
Effie is a little child!

MY SOUL TO THINE[1]

A TRANSCENDENTAL VALENTINE

ANTITHESIS of Light, which is but gloom,
Myself in darkness shrouds; I know not why
Thy glances re-illumine — yet of them, One
Is ever in my eye!

Perchance 't is why I hold this thought most dear —
What is, may still be, what is fixed won't change:
The Future and the Past are not as clear
As things that are less strange.

Who knows what 's What, yet says not which is Which —
He is reticent and precise in speech;
The same should tune his thoughts to concert pitch
By some deep sounding beach.

But he who knoweth Which and what is Which —
He is not simple nor perchance is dull —
Shall occupy himself a vacant niche
In some stupendous Whole.

SERENADE

(ADAPTED TO THE LATITUDE OF SAN FRANCISCO)

"O LIST, lady, list! while thy lover outside
Pours forth those fond accents that thrill thee;

[1] *Golden Era*, February 17, 1861.

O list! both thy doors and thy windows beside
For fear that some thorough draught chill thee.
The 'sweet summer morn 's' hanging low in the sky,
And the fog 's drifting wildly around me;
There is damp in my throat, there is sand in my eye,
And my old friend Neuralgia has found me.

"O list, lady, list! ere this thin searching mist
Subdues all my amorous frenzy;
The Pleiads' 'soft influence' here is, I wist,
Replaced by the harsh influenza;
And now, lady sweet, I must bid thee 'good-night,'
A night that would quench Hymen's torch, love,
For a lute by the fire is much more polite,
Than a song and catarrh in the porch, love."

THE PRIZE-FIGHTER TO HIS MISTRESS[1]

O, BELIEVE not the party who says love is bought,
Nor lend thy fond "lug" when his tale he 'd begin;
But bid him behold thy dear "mug" on this breast,
This "bunch of fives" clasping thy own lovely "fin."

Or show him the "home-brewed" that flushes thy "nob,"
When in thy "jug-handle" my love I recite,
And then if his "goggles" are not Cupid's own,
He 'll reel to his corner at that "draft at sight."

What "punishment" waits on the cove that deceives,
How "soggy" the "smasher" that gets him so prime,
When he "throws up the sponge" at the ultimate round,
And Eternity calls — and he can't "come to Time."

[1] *Golden Era*, October 11, 1863.

Yet, Mary, dear Mary, such love is not mine,
But "mawley" in "mawley" together we'll tread;
The "belt" for the cestus of Venus I'll change,
And know but one "Ring" — in the ring we are wed.

MARY'S ALBUM[1]

WRITTEN IN 1863, in AN ALBUM BELONGING TO CHARLES WARREN STODDARD

SWEET MARY, maid of San Andreas,
Upon her natal day,
Procured an album, double-gilt,
Entitled, "The Bouquet."

But what its purpose was beyond
Its name, she could not guess;
And so between its gilded leaves
The flowers *he* gave she'd press.

Yet blame her not, poetic youth!
Nor deem too great the wrong;
She knew not Hawthorne's bloom, nor loved
Macaulay-flowers of song.

Her hymn-book was the total sum
Of her poetic lore,
And, having read through Dr. Watts,
She did not ask for Moore.

But when she ope'd her book again,
How great was her surprise
To find the leaves on either side
Stained deep with crimson dyes.

[1] *Californian*, April, 1880.

And in that rose — his latest gift —
A shapeless form she views;
Its fragrance sped, its beauty fled,
And vanished all its dews.

O Mary, maid of San Andreas!
Too sad was your mistake —
Yet one, methinks, that wiser folk
Are very apt to make.

Who 'twixt these leaves would fix the shapes
That love and truth assume,
Will find they keep, like Mary's rose,
The stain, and not the bloom.

THE REJECTED STOCKHOLDER [1]

A LOCAL MONOLOGUE

I THOUGHT that I had won her heart,
Before assessments came
To chill the fever of her blood
And check her youthful flame;
But ah! 't was not for me, but mine,
She spread her female snares —
I asked for one to share my love,
And not to love my shares!

I wooed her when the young May moon
And tranquil patient stars
Their lustre spread, and all the earth
Seemed strewn with silver bars;

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), January 20, 1864.

Her praise I whispered to the sky,
The free winds spoke her fame,
And one location — all in vain —
I took — in her sweet name!

But now another's offering lies
Before that fickle shrine;
Another claims her hand — his claim
Is worth much more than mine;
But though he offers all I lack
To make her joy complete —
I would not stand in that man's shoes
Unless I had his feet!

O, tell me not of golden legs
That Kilmanseggs have known;
They 're nothing to the silver feet
My fickle fair would own.
The dream is past; but in these fond
Certificates I view —
Observe, ye credulous, what faith
And printers' ink may do.

My loving verses she returns
Though once she thought them fine —
She 's grown so critical in feet
She scans each faulty line.
And yet my fate I meekly bear
And find relief in sighs;
For oh, no Savage rules this breast,
Nor Chollar that may rise!

Oh, youth, who seekest Fortune's smile,
Shun, if thou canst, alway,

The woman's wile, the broker's guile,
That gild but to betray.
So use this world that in the next,
When here thy days shall end,
Thy last six feet of earth shall yield
To thee a dividend!

ON A NAUGHTY LITTLE BOY, SLEEPING[1]

JUST now I missed from hall and stair
A joyful treble that had grown
As dear to me as that grave tone
That tells the world my older care.

And little footsteps on the floor
Were stayed. I laid aside my pen,
Forgot my theme, and listened — then
Stole softly to the library door.

No sight! no sound! — a moment's freak
Of fancy thrilled my pulses through:
"If — no" — and yet, that fancy drew
A father's blood from heart and cheek.

And then — I found him! There he lay,
Surprised by sleep, caught in the act,
The rosy vandal who had sacked
His little town, and thought it play:

The shattered vase; the broken jar;
A match still smouldering on the floor;
The inkstand's purple pool of gore;
The chessmen scattered near and far.

[1] *Californian*, September 17, 1864. *Harper's Magazine*, July, 1877.

Strewn leaves of albums lightly pressed
This wicked "Baby of the Woods";
In fact, of half the household goods
This son and heir was seized — possessed.

Yet all in vain, for sleep had caught
The hand that reached, the feet that strayed;
And fallen in that ambuscade
The victor was himself o'erwrought.

What though torn leaves and tattered book
Still testified his deep disgrace!
I stooped and kissed the inky face,
With its demure and calm outlook.

Then back I stole, and half beguiled
My guilt, in trust that when my sleep
Should come, there might be One who 'd keep
An equal mercy for His child.

AT THE SEPULCHRE[1]

(Thomas Starr King)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1864

HERE in God's sunshine, peaceful lie,
Though not beneath yon arches' swell;
One springing roof alone — the sky —
Can hold the flock that loved thee well.

Yon sacred gates are free to all,
Who join in Sabbath praise and prayer;

[1] *Californian*, October 15, 1864.

Thy pulpit grave, beside shall call
A week-day fold from street and square.

Though o'er thy tomb no anthems rise,
The world its labor-hymn shall sing,
And sliding footsteps drown the sighs
Of small-tongued grasses, whispering.

And greener yet that spot shall grow,
For thy dear dust within it laid,
And brighter yet the sunlight glow —
And dim and grateful seem the shade.

For when the sun slopes down the west,
The shadow of yon sacred wall,
Like God's right arm across thy breast
Near and protectingly shall fall.

And all night long above thy urn
The patient stars shall pierce the gloom,
Like those eternal lamps that burn
And circle round a royal tomb.

And those who deemed they knew the best
Shall find how foolish was their claim —
And fear thy liberal bounty, lest
It clip their dividend of fame.

And some of humbler faith shall stand
Before thy tomb, and watch its door,
Expectant that some angel's hand
May roll the stone that lies before.

ARCADIA REVISITED[1]

Ah, here 's the spot — the very tree
Where once I carved an L. and E.,
Symbolical of her and me
  Bound in Love's rosy fetters;
Since then five weary years are spent,
And yet I think we 're both content
That in Love's Book we never went
  Beyond our simple letters.

For, looking through the rustling leaves,
I see the humble cottage eaves
Where now my Em. no longer weaves
  Her mystic maiden fancies,
But milks her cows — she called 'em kine
In the brave days when she was mine —
But now she 's dropped those phrases fine
  She borrowed from romances.

But here 's the place — the very tree
Where once I fell on bended knee
And breathed my burning vows — while she
  Stood by in pale pink muslin.
I kissed her hand — but why revamp
Old feelings now? — the grass is damp,
And what with this rheumatic cramp
  To kneel now would be puzzling.

She walks no more 'neath starlit skies,
She calls the evening mists that rise
Miasma, and the dew that lies
  Is damp and cold and shocking.

[1] *Californian*, July 22, 1865.

She now wears boots. Five years ago
Her skirts she gathered up below ;
'T was not from dampness, but to show
Her slippers and white stocking.

Beneath this shade we used to read
"Maud Muller," and we both agreed
The Judge was wrong — but why proceed ?
She 's married to another !
She has not pined — that form is stout
That once this arm was clasped about,
She has two girls ; they 're both, no doubt,
The image of their mother !

She said she loved not "wealth or state,"
But most adored the "wise and great,"
And gave a look to intimate
That this was my complexion ;
"Her husband should be eyed like Mars,"
That 's he, there, letting down the bars,
In cowhide boots. No doubt her Pa's,
But O, not *her* selection !

And yet, am I her young love's dream :
The pensive lover that did seem
The rightful Prince who should redeem
The promise of her fancies ?
And I that same dyspeptic youth
Who rang the chimes on "sooth" and "truth,'
Minus that *cuspidate* tooth
Whose presence kills romances ?

O Love, behind yon leafy screen !
Why can't all trees be evergreen ?

Why can't all girls be sweet sixteen,
All men but one-and-twenty?
Why are the scars that hearts must wear
Deeper than those yon tree may bear?
And why are lovers now so rare,
And married folk so plenty?

THE SABBATH BELLS[1]

SUNDAY, JULY 30, 1865

RING, Sabbath bells, O softly ring,
And with your peaceful accents bring
To loving ears a welcome tale
Of flowing seas and gentle gale —
Ring!

Peal, all ye Sabbath bells — O peal,
And tell the few who watch and kneel
Of hidden snares and sunken rocks,
Of surges white and sudden shocks —
Peal!

Toll, O ye Sabbath bells, and toll
Each passing and heroic soul:
Toll for the sacrifices sweet,
For duty done and work complete —
Toll!

Chime, O ye Sabbath bells, O chime!
Each man has his appointed time;
The worst is but a glad release;
Chime, Sabbath bells, a song of Peace —
Chime!

[1] *Californian*, August 5, 1865.

IMPORTANT MEXICAN CORRESPONDENCE[1]

AN INTERCEPTED LETTER

Dear Trem: —

From "orange groves and fields of balm"
These loving lines I send,
But first you really ought to know
The feelings of your friend.

For when it's winter where you live,
The weather here's like June;
The "Season's Choir" Thomson sings,
In fact, is out of tune.

All day at ninety-eight degrees
The mercury has stood,
Without a figure I may say,
I'm "in a melting mood."

The fields are parched and so's my lips —
I quaff at every spring;
So dry a "summer," Trem, my dear,
"Two swallows" could not bring.

You know "two swallows do not make
It summer" — but methinks
The summer in this latitude
Is made of many drinks.

The politics, I grieve to say,
I find in great confusion —
For like the earth the people have
A daily revolution.

[1] *Californian*, September 23, 1865.

Their manners to a stranger here,
Is stranger yet to see;
Last night in going to a ball
A ball went into me.

I 'm fond of reading, as you know,
But then it was a sin
To be obliged against my will,
To take a Bullet-in.

They cried, "DIOS Y LIBERTAD!"
And then pitched into me;
I hate to hear a sacred name
Used with such "liberty."

I should have said to you before,
But every method fails,
For since they have impressed the men,
Of course, they 've stopped the males.

POEMS OF LOCAL INTEREST

1857–1869

"MAD RIVER"[1]

WHERE the Redwood spires together
Pierce the mists in stormy weather,
Where the willow's topmost feather
  Waves the limpid waters o'er;
Where the long and sweeping surges
Sing their melancholy dirges,
There the river just emerges
  On the sad Pacific's shore.

From the headland, high and hoary,
From the western promontory,
Where the sunset seas of glory
  Sparkle with an emerald sheen,
You may see it slowly twining,
In the valley low reclining,
Like a fringe of silver shining —
  Edging on a mantle green.

You can see its gleaming traces
In the vale — the pleasant places
Where, amidst the alder's mazes,
  There the salmon berries grow,
Until faint and fainter growing,
In the upland dimly flowing,
Where the serried hills are showing,
  And the shadows come and go.

In those days, long gone and over,
Ere the restless pale-faced rover
Sought the quiet Indian cover,
  Many, many moons ago,

[1] *Golden Era*, July 26, 1857.

Warrior braves met one another,
Not as ally, friend or brother,
But the fires of hate to smother
In the placid water's flow.

All the day they fierce contended,
And the battle scarce had ended
When the bloody sun descended,
And the river bore away
All the remnants of that slaughter
In a crimson tide, the water,
And they call it PATAWATA,[1]
Ever since the fatal day.

THE PONY EXPRESS[2]

(The Pony Express was, at one time, the sole dependence of the Pacific Coast for the latest news from the Atlantic)

IN times of adventure, of battle and song,
When the heralds of victory galloped along,
They spurred their faint steeds, lest the tidings too late
Might change a day's fortune, a throne, or a state.
Though theirs was all honor and glory — no less
Is his, the bold Knight of the Pony Express.
No corselet, no vizor, nor helmet he wears,
No war-stirring trumpet or banner he bears,
But pressing the sinewy flanks of his steed,
Behold the fond missives that bid him "God-speed."
Some ride for ambition, for glory, or less,
"Five dollars an ounce" asks the Pony Express.

[1] *Patawat*, a tribe of North American Indians living on lower Mad River, *California*.

[2] *Golden Era*, July 1, 1860.

Trip lightly, trip lightly, just out of the town,
Then canter and canter, o'er upland and down,
Then trot, pony, trot, over upland and hill,
Then gallop, boy, gallop, and galloping still,
Till the ring of each horse-hoof, as forward ye press,
Is lost in the track of the Pony Express.

By marshes and meadow, by river and lake,
By upland and lowland, by forest and brake,
By dell and by cañon, by bog and by fen,
By dingle and hollow, by cliff and by glen,
By prairie and desert, and vast wilderness,
At morn, noon, and evening, God speed the Express.

THE ARGUMENT OE LURLINE [1]

Air: "The Tall Young Oysterman"

COUNT RUDOLPH was a noble gent, as lived upon the Rhine,
Who spent his money very free in Lager Beer and Wine;
The Baron Truenfels, likewise, was neighbor of the same,
Which had a rather uppish girl — G. Truenfels by name.

Rudolph would wed Miss Truenfels, but was n't it a go?
Each thought that t'other had the tin (you know how lovers blow),
But when old T. says, "Pungle down," Count Rudolph he says, "Stuff;
I 've youth and rank, that 's more than gold"; says G., "It ain't enough.

[1] Wallace's romantic opera of "Lurline" created considerable interest upon its appearance at Maguire's Opera House in San Francisco, in November, 1860. Bret Harte's night at the opera called forth the foregoing ironical "argument" which he contributed to the Golden Era.

"I wants a diamond thingamy — likewise a nice trossoo,
I wants a kerridge of me own, and so, young man, adoo";
The Baron also cuts up rough — but Rudolph is content,
And merely takes a stiffer horn, observing, "Let her went."

Now just before this jolly row, a gal they called Lurline
Was living down at Lurlineburgh, of which she was the Queen;
She was a Lady Dashaway — when water was on hand —
But had some spirits of her own she likewise could command.

This girl close by a whirlpool sat — this female named Lurline —
And played with most exquisite taste upon the tamborine;
The way the sailors steered into them whirlpools was a sin —
Young men, beware of sich sirens who thus take fellers in.

Now Count Rudolph was wide awake, beyond the power of suction;
Which caused Lurline to fall in love and seek an introduction.
And when he's tight, one day, she slips a ring upon his finger;
And thus Count Rudolph is bewitched by that bewitching singer.

Then straightway in his boat he jumps, which soon begins to sink,
While all his brave com-pan-i-ons are yelling on the brink,
"You're half-seas-over now, you fool, — come back, you'll surely drown";
Down goes the gallant German gent, a whistling "*Derry Down.*"

Down, down among the oyster-beds, he finds the sweet Lurline,
A cutting such a heavy swell — a gorgeous submarine;
Her father Rhineberg's very rich, and fellers said, who punned,
"He took deposits from the tars and kept a sinking fund."

Count Rudolph did consent to stay at Rhineberg's flash hotel,
And half-made up his mind that with Lurline he'd ever dwell;
"I'm partial to the water-cure and fond of clams," says he,
"But such as you, Miss Rhineberg, are a subject quite *per se.*"

But suddenly he hears a noise, which made him weaken some
The howling of his friends above — says he, "I must go home,
Good-bye, Miss R." "Hold up!" says she, we'll do the handsome thing,
Pa gives this massy chunk of gold. You keep my magic ring."

So Rudolph takes the ring and gold, and comes home with a rush,
And very glad his neighbors was to see him come so flush.
And even old Miss Truenfels to welcome him began,
And says, "I always thought you was a very nice young man."

Likewise she says, "My eye," and makes believe to faint away,
And sich-like gammon. But the Count says, "Come, now, that won't pay!

I loves another!" "Cruel man! That ring I now diskiver —
Say whose?" "My gal's!" She snatches it and chucks it in the river.

Now one of Lurline's father's help had caught the ring and ran
To her and says, "You see what comes of loving that young man."
Poor Lurline feels somewhat cut up — and to assuage her pain
She takes her father's oyster sloop and comes ashore again.

'T was lucky that she did come up, for Rudolph's friends were bent
On sharing Rudolph's golden store, without Rudolph's consent;
And him they would assassinate, but Lurline she says, "Hold!"
And waves a wand until they stand like statoos, stiff and cold.

They stood like statoos on the bridge — it was a bridge of sighs;
For straightway most unpleasantly the tide began to rise;
It rose, but when the river swept away the bridge at last,
They found, although the tide was flood, their chances ebbing fast.

It rose until the wicked all had found a watery grave —
And then it sank and left Rudolph and neighbors in a cave.
Rudolph then marries Miss Lurline; is happy, rich, and able
To take the lowest bid to lay the next Atlantic Cable.

THE YERBA BUENA[1]

When from the distant lands, and burning South,
Came Junipero — through the plains of drouth,—
Bringing God's promise by the word of mouth,

With blistered feet and fever-stricken brain,
He sank one night upon the arid plain,—
If God so willed it — not to rise again;

A heathen convert stood in wonder by;
"If God is God — the Father shall not die,"
He said. The dying priest made no reply.

"This in His name!" the savage cried, and drew
From the parched brook an herb that thereby grew,
And rubbed its leaves his dusky fingers through;

Then with the bruisèd stalks he bound straightway
The Padre's feet and temples where he lay,
And sat him down in faith, to wait till day;

When rose the Padre — as the dead may rise —
Reading the story in the convert's eyes,
"A miracle! God's herb" — the savage cries.

"Not so," replies the ever humble priest;
"God's loving goodness showeth in the least,
Not God's but *good* be known the herb thou seest!"

Then rising up he wandered forth alone;
And ever since, where'er its seed be sown,
As Yerba Buena is the good herb known.

[1] *Golden Era*, April 5, 1863.

TREASURER A——Y[1]

Air: "A Frog He would A-wooing Go"

Our A——y would a-brokering go,
Heigh ho, for A——y!
Whether the people would let him or no,
Whether they fancied his practices low,
Or the economical-comical show
Of their State Treasurer A——y.

The Federal tax he collected in gold,
Heigh ho, for A——y,
But straightway the coin and the taxpayers sold,
By buying up Treasury notes, so we 're told,
At a nice little discount — O, that was a bold
Speculation of Treasurer A——y's.

Let poor Uncle Samuel do what he may,
Heigh ho, for A——y.
What does he care what the newspapers say?
Let Volunteers starve upon half of their pay,
Lord bless us — it 's the economical way
Of great State Treasurer A——y.

What shall we do with our great financier?
Heigh ho, for A——y.
He 's rather expensive to keep by the year,
As a business transaction 't is certainly clear
To get ourselves rid of him no discount 's dear,
That exchanges State Treasurer A——y.

[1] State Treasurer Ashley, of California, in 1863 paid the State's tax to the Government in legal tender notes. Gold, of course, at this time was at a premium, and Ashley had received this Federal tax in gold. The *press severely criticized* him for the transaction, and upon an attempt to *repeat the offense* the notes were refused by the United States Treasurer.

COLENSO RHYMES FOR ORTHODOX CHILDREN[1]

A SMART man was Bishop Colenso —
'T were better he never had been so —
He said, "A queer book
Is that same Pentateuch!"
Said the clergy, "You mus n't tell men so."

There once was a Bishop of Natal
Who made this admission most fatal;
He said: "Between us
I fear *Exodus*
Is a pretty tough yarn for Port Natal."

Shall I believe that Noah's Ark
Rode on the waters blue?
Or must I, with Colenso, say
The story is untrue?

What then becomes of all my joys —
That ark I loved so well —
Those tigers — dear to little boys —
Shall they this error swell?

There once was a Bishop, and what do you think!
He talked with a Zulu, who says with a wink,
"Folks say that the Pentateuch 's true. — I deny it."
And never since then has this Bishop been quiet.

[1] *Golden Era*, June 14, 1863.

POEM[1]

DELIVERED AT THE PATRIOTIC EXERCISES IN THE METROPOLITAN THEATRE, SAN FRANCISCO, JULY 4, 1863.

(Written for the event by the poet of the day, Bret Harte, and read by the Reverend Thomas Starr King.)

It 's hard, on Independence Day, to find, with Thomas Moore,
Your "Minstrel boy," his harp and song has taken to the war —
To ask some sober citizen to seize the passing time
And turn from scanning "silver feet" to cesuras of rhyme!

But then we need no poet's aid to lift our eyes and look
Beyond our Ledger's narrow rim, and post the nation's book —
To strike our country's balance-sheet, nor shrink in foolish pride
Because the ink is black that brings a balance to our side!

We 've names enough of rhythmic swell our halting verse to fill,
There 's Bennington, and Concord Bridge, and Breed's or Bunker's Hill;
There 's Lexington and Valley Forge — whose anvils' ringing peal,
Beat out on dreary winter nights the Continental steel!

There 's Yorktown, Trenton, Stony Point, King's Mill and Brandywine
To end — *in* lieu of rebel's necks — some patriotic line;

[1] *Golden Era*, July 5, 1863.

There 's Saratoga — Monmouth too — who can our limit fix ?
Enough — the total added up is known as Seventy-Six !

With themes like these to flush the cheek, and bid the pulses play
Amidst the glories of the Past, we gather here to-day —
The twig our Fathers planted then has grown a spreading tree,
Whose branches sift their blossoms white, to-day, on either sea !
We 've grown too large, some people think — our neighbor, 'cross the way —
Suggests Division, though — just now — substraction 's more his way —
(But he 's a Diplomatic friend we neither seek nor fear,
Who gives the North his public voice — the South his privateer !)

No, no, we stand alone to-day, as when, one fierce July,
The sinking lion saw new stars flash from the western sky —
To-day, old vows our hearts renew — these throes that shake the Earth
Are but the pangs that usher in the Nation's newer birth !

God keep us all — defend the right — draw nearer while we sing
The song our country asks to-day, till hills and valleys ring ;
(But first we 'll draw our metre's rein e'er we again begin,
As soldiers from their battle front when ranks are closing in.)

(*The Song*)

O, God of our country — if silent we come,
With wreaths that are old to thy altar to-day ;

'T is but that elsewhere, to the beat of thy drum,
Our love pours its roses far redder than they!

If the ring of our silver and gold be untrue,
And chimes no accord to the clash of thy steel;
It changes, dissolving, to fall like the dew,
In silence to strengthen — in mercy to heal!

Shall the ties that we love by false hands be unbound?
Shall *we* turn away when our brothers appeal
To the youngest of all — who, like Benjamin, found
The silver cup hid in his measure of meal?

No, Lord, we are one — we must come to thy door,
As martyrs, together — together as free;
Though the tempest that lashes the rough Plymouth shore
Shall mingle its spray with the calm Western sea!

Far better the tempest than yon lurid glow
That lights, while it mocks, the deep gloom of the sky —
Far better the lightning that smites with one blow,
Than the Copperhead's crest as uplifted on high!

Let the foe tempt our youth in his treacherous haste,
Our blades shall defend the bright colors we bear;
As our Cactus protects in the desolate waste,
The one tint of Eden that God has left there!

Then one ringing cheer for the deed and the day —
One smile for the present — one tear for the past;
Lord! lend us thine ear when thy servants shall pray,
Our future may show how thy mercies still last!

SOUTH PARK[1]

(SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 1864)

(After Gray)

THE foundry tolls the knell of parting day,
The weary clerk goes slowly home to tea,
The North Beach car rolls onward to the bay,
And leaves the world to solitude and me.

Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And through the Park a solemn hush prevails,
Save, in the distance, where some school-boy wight
Rattles his hoop-stick on the iron rails;

Save, that from yonder jealous-guarded basement
Some servant-maid vehement doth complain,
Of wicked youths who, playing near her casement,
Project their footballs through her window-pane.

Can midnight lark or animated "bust"
To these grave scenes bring mirth without alloy?
Can shrill street-boys proclaim their vocal trust
In John, whose homeward march produces joy?

Alas! for them no organ-grinders play,
Nor sportive monkey move their blinds genteel;
Approach and read, if thou canst read, the lay,
Which these grave dwellings through their stones reveal:

"Here rests his fame, within yon ring of earth,
A soul who strove to benefit mankind —
Of private fortune and of public worth,
His trade — first man, then sugar he refined.

[1] *Californian*, September 24, 1864.

"Large was his bounty, and he made his mark;
Read here his record free from stains or blots:
He gave the public all he had — his Park;
He sold the public — all he asked — his lots!"

THE PLAZA[1]

(SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA, 1864)

(After Sir Walter Scott)

If thou wouldst view the Plaza aright,
Go visit it by the pale moonlight;
For the gay beams of lightsome day
Show that the fountain *does not* play.
When the broken benches are hid in shade,
With many a vagrant recumbent laid;
When the clock on the Monumental tower
Tolls to the night the passing hour;
When cabman and hackman alternately
Entreat and threaten — indulging free
In coarse yet forcible imagery;
When the scrolls that show thee the playhouse nigh,
In monstrous letters do feign and lie,
Of "Fun divest of Vulgarity";
When Bella Union is heard to rave
O'er the last conundrum the minstrel gave;
When the street-boy pauses — intent upon
The band at Gilbert's Melodeon —
Then go — but go alone the while,
And view John Bensley's ruined pile,
And, home returning — do not swear
If thou hast seen some things more fair.

[1] *Californian*, October 8, 1864.

THE FIRST BROOM RANGER[1]

AN OLD STORY WITH A NEW MORAL

ONCE upon the Cornish strand
Rose a tide so vast and brimming,
That it overflowed the land,
And the hamlet set a-swimming.

Every cellar was submerged,
Yet the tide kept slowly swelling
Till the waters broke and surged
O'er the threshold of each dwelling.

Then it was an ancient crone
(True to what tradition taught her)
Seized her broom, and, all alone,
Set to sweeping out the water.

Through that ancient female's room
Rolled the mighty ocean past her —
Still the old girl with her broom
Only worked and swept the faster.

When the people gathered round
And in fear and terror sought her,
All of that poor dame they found
Was her BROOM upon the water.

Only with her latest breath
Had she ceased her work gigantic:
Fairly, squarely met her death,
Sweeping out the vast Atlantic.

[1] [Part of the George B. McClellan torchlight procession in San Francisco, October 11, 1864, consisted of nearly a thousand men carrying brooms, called "Broom Rangers." They were sympathizers with McClellan in his *campaign for President* against Abraham Lincoln.]

ANSWERING THE BELL [1]

A STORY OF THE LATE EARTHQUAKE (SAN FRANCISCO, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1865)

At Number Four, had Dennis More
A decent situation —
A Celtic youth, who showed, in truth,
But little cultivation,
And "wore the green" —the kind, I mean,
Not reached by legislation.

His knowledge did not go beyond
The doorbell he attended,
The boots he blacked — the services
On which his place depended;
Yet with his humble duties he
A certain zeal had blended.

One Sunday morn — the folks were all
At church, and no doubt sleeping,
While Dennis More at Number Four
His household watch was keeping —
When all at once there came a ring
That set his pulses leaping.

He started to his feet, but ere
He took erect position,
A certain trembling in his knees
Betrayed their weak condition;
And looking round, poor Dennis found
This fearful exhibition:

[1] *Californian*, October 14, 1865.

The kitchen clock that ere the shock
The time of day was showing,
Had stopped its pendulum, although
The clock itself was going;
It fell — he thought the End of Time
Had come with no man's knowing.

The tumblers tumbled on the shelves,
Moved by mysterious forces,
The plates were shifted as they are
In dinners of twelve courses;
And knives went racing for the plate,
Just like St. Leger horses.

But high above the general crash
He heard the doorbell ringing,
And staggering to his feet he reached
The hall where he saw swinging
The study door, and down before
Its bookshelves he fell, clinging.

One hurried glance he gave — enough
For fatal confirmation —
The very globe upon its stand
Still rocked to its foundation,
And all the standard volumes seemed
In active circulation.

The fearful thrill, continuing still,
Had loosed "The Stones of Venice,"
The law-books just above his head
Ejectment seemed to menace —
Till down fell "Coke on Littleton,"
Followed by "Kent" on Dennis'

The very poets were disturbed —
The mild and peaceful Lakers,
As though they 'd caught from "Aspen Court"
Some power that made them Shakers;
Or, that the "Life of William Penn"
Had turned them all to Quakers.

The "Testimony of the Rocks,"
In rocking, was appalling —
Thermometer and weather-glass
Both side by side were falling;
Yet 'midst the jar — a Leyden jar —
He heard the doorbell calling.

Half dead, he reached the hall again, —
Sometimes on all-fours creeping, —
Wide swung the parlor's creaking door,
And, through the portals peeping,
He saw a Turkish ottoman
Like some wild dervish leaping;

Four high-backed chairs that waltzed in pairs,
Two easy-chairs coquetting;
And — like some dowager that found
A partner hard of getting —
The piano against the wall
Was right and left foot *poussetting*.

Yet, spite of giddy sights and scenes
Of books and portraits reeling,
To Dennis' brain one thing was plain —
The doorbell still was pealing;
He seized the knob expectant of
Some frightful form revealing.

The hinges swung — the door was flung
Wide open, but no spying
Disclosed the hand that rung the bell,
Nor anybody trying,
Save that a pale-faced man stood near,
The walls intently eyeing.

One bound gave Dennis to the ground
And seized the rash spectator —
With wicked fingers round his throat
He clutched his respirator:
"Is thim your Sunday thricks?" he cried,
"Ye haythen agitator!"

"The earthquake!" gasped the wretch. With scorn
Bold Dennis drew his brows down;
"The airthquake, is it?" Then he gave
A forcible but coarse noun —
"And that's the wake excuse ye 'd give
For ringing master's house down!"

MIDSUMMER [1]

A SAN FRANCISCO MADRIGAL

"The air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our several senses."
Macbeth.

Now Cancer holds the fiery sun,
And Sirius flames in yonder skies,
Midsummer's languid reign 's begun —
Arise, my lady sweet, arise;
Come forth ere evening's shadows fall —
But, dearest, don't forget thy shawl.

[1] *Californian*, July 21, 1866.

For why, methinks these zephyrs bland
  Are brisk and jocund in their play.
These tears, thou may'st not understand,
  Spring but from joy at such a day;
And, dearest, what thou deem'st a frown
Is but to keep my beaver down.

Now generous Nature kindly sifts
  Her blessings free from liberal hand:
How varied are her graceful gifts;
  How soft — (yes, dearest, that *was* sand,
A trifle — and by Nature thrown
O'er this fresh signature — her own!)

Here let us sit and watch, till morn,
  The fleecy fog that creeps afar,
And, like a poultice, soothes the torn
  And wind-bruised face of cliff and scar;
Nor fear no chill from damp nor dew,
Nor — (really! bless my soul — a-tschu!)

A sneeze — 't is nothing — what of that?
  Or if I choose, in youthful guise,
To chase this lightly flying hat,
  Instead of painted butterflies —
'T is but the latitude, you know,
The season gives — well, well, we 'll go.

And when once more within our cot,
  Where sweetly streams the fragrant tea,
And buttered muffins crisp and hot,
  Their welcome spread for you and me;
Then, love, by fires that glitter bright,
We 'll sing Midsummer's soft delight.

POEM[1]

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF THE LAYING OF THE CORNER-STONE OF THE CALIFORNIA DEAF, DUMB, AND BLIND ASYLUM, SEPTEMBER 26, 1867

Written for this event by Bret Harte and read by John Swett

FAIR the terrace that o'erlooks
Curving bay and sheltered nooks;
Groves that break the western blasts,
Steepled distance fringed with masts,
And the gate that fronts our home
With its bars of cold sea-foam.

Here no flashing signal falls
Over darkened sea and sail;
Here no ruddy lighthouse calls
White-winged Commerce with its hail;
But above the peaceful vale
Watchful, silent, calm and pale,
Science lifts her beacon walls.

Love, alone, the lamp whose beam
Shines above the troubled stream;
Here shall patience, wise and sweet,
Gather round her waiting feet
God's unfinished few, whom fate
And their failings consecrate;
Haply that her skill create
What His will left incomplete.

Ah, Bethsaida's pool no more
Sees the miracles of yore;

[1] *Californian*, September 28, 1867.

Faith no more to blinded eyes
Brings the light that skill denies;
Not again shall part on earth
Lips that Nature sealed from birth.
Though His face the Master hides,
Love eternal still abides
  Underneath the arching sky,
And his hand through Science guides
  Speechless lip and sightless eye.

This is our Bethsaida's pool,
This our thaumaturgic school;
We, O Lord, more dumb than these —
Knowing but of bended knees
And the sign of claspèd hands —
Here upon our western sands,
  By these broad Pacific seas,
Through these stones are eloquent,
  And our feeble, faltering speech
Gains what once the pebbles lent
  On the legendary beach
  Unto old Demosthenes.

PORTALA'S CROSS[1]

Pious Portala, journeying by land,
Reared high a cross upon the heathen strand,
  Then far away
Dragged his slow caravan to Monterey.

The mountains whispered to the valleys, "Good!"
The sun, slow sinking in the western flood,
  Baptized in blood
The holy standard of the Brotherhood.

[1] *Overland Monthly*, August, 1869.

The timid fog crept in across the sea,
Drew near, embraced it, and streamed far and free,
Saying: "O ye
Gentiles and Heathen, this is truly He!"

All this the Heathen saw; and when once more
The holy Fathers touched the lonely shore —
Then covered o'er
With shells and gifts — the cross their witness bore.

CIVIL WAR POEMS

1862–1865

A VOLUNTEER STOCKING[1]

With fingers thoroughbred, rosy and fair,
She was knitting a stocking for soldiers to wear.

But I thought, as through intricate loop and braid
Those fingers so willfully flashed and played,
Not alone did they catch in their weaving play
A woolen thread nor a filament gray,
But some subtler fancies — as maidens best know
Were knit in that stocking from heel to toe.

Those sweet, tangled fancies, that women so long
Have cherished in sorrow, oppression, and wrong;
Those poetic impulses, waiting the warm
Grasp of Faith but to shapen and give them a form.
Thus Valor and Trust, from a chaos so full,
Here mixed with the gathering meshes of wool,
To be marshaled more firm, as with resolute chin
And half-pouting lip she knit them all in,
Till the flash of the needle's leaping light
Gleamed like those lances, when knight to knight,
In the olden joust of Chivalry's might
(Thought I), did battle for Love and Right.

So she sate, with a drooping head,
Knitting, — but not with a single thread, —
Till under the long lash something grew
Misty and faint as the mountain's blue,
Then dropped —
Like a flash it was gone
Caught and absorbed in the woven yarn,

[1] *Golden Era*, July 20, 1862.

A tear, — just to show that the stocking was done, —
And Pity had finished what Trust had begun.

THE CONSERVATIVE BRIDGE OF SIGHS[1]

(After Hood)

TREAT her with strategy,
Touch her with care,
Nor with rash energy
Harm one so fair!

Respect her sentiments,
So truly eloquent,
While still consistently
Drips from her clothing
Loyal blood — Look at it,
Loving not loathing.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny;
Rash and undutiful,
Past all dishonor,
BLIGHT has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still for these slips of hers,
One of ABE'S family
Wipe those pale lips of hers,
Spitting so clammily;
Bring back her chattels,
Her fond valued chattels,
Where'er they may roam;
Hand-cuff 'em, chain 'em, and
Send 'em back home.

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), September 11, 1862.

Seek not to damage
Her own institution;
Tenderly put back
The old Constitution.

Where the lights quiver,
So far down the river,
For many a night,
In ditches and trenches —
McClellan's defenses —
The conflict commences,
But never a fight!

Best they should tarry where
Dreadful malaria
Racks them with pain;
But let no contraband
Lend them a helping hand,
If you 've a care for
The Union again.

Perishing gloomily;
Spurred by old womanly,
Feeble loquacity,
Weak incapacity,
Gone to its rest.
Still pertinacity
Says it is best.

Should the North rigidly
Stiffen too frigidly,
Decently — kindly —
Smooth and compose them,
And their eyes close them,
Staring so blindly,

Dreadfully staring
Through muddy impurity,
As that glance of daring,
The soldier despairing,
Fixed on Futurity.

Thus with such strategy
Still the South spare,
Nor with rash energy
Harm one so fair.

Owning the weakness
Of her institution,
And saving her under
The old Constitution.

BANKS AND THE SLAVE GIRL[1]

[General N. P. Banks, Major-General of Volunteers, Union Army, commanded at the battle of Cedar Mountain, August 9, 1862.]

THROUGH shot and shell, one summer's day,
We stood the battle's rack,
With gaping files and shattered ranks
Our men were falling back;
When through our lines, a little child
Ran down the bloody track.

To know if she were bond or free
We had no time to spare,
Or scan with microscopic eye
The texture of her hair;
For lo, begrimed with battle smoke,
Our men looked scarce as fair.

[1] *Golden Era*, October 26, 1862.

Her name, her home, her master's claim,
We could not then decide,
Until our Iron Chief rode up
Ere we could cheer or chide,
And pointing to a howitzer,
He grimly bade her "ride."

First glancing down that ghastly lane,
Where dead and dying lay,
Then back at us, and like a flash,
We saw his glances say:
"The child is free. Their batteries
Have opened her the way!"

Perhaps they had — I said before
We could not then decide;
For we were sorely pressed that day,
And driven back beside,
And mayhap in our chieftain's act,
Some moral then we spied.

THE BATTLE AUTUMN[1]

THE last high wain of toppling sheaves
Goes by — the farm gate swings to rest;
The yellow harvest, and the leaves
The red Fruit-Bearers' lips have pressed,
Lie trophies piled on Nature's breast!

But when the clouds hang dark and low,
And bird and bee no longer roam —
And long before the pitying snow
To bury the dead leaves shall come —
We 'll call another Harvest Home!

[1] *Golden Era*, November 23, 1862.

We 'll call that Harvest, last and best,
The Warrior-Reaper, reaps by chance,
The broken hope — the shattered crest —
The nerveless hand — the quenchèd glance
That heap the creeping ambulance!

Swing wide your gates — the car rolls on:
O Reaper, are your spoils like these?
Ah, no! when dragon's teeth are sown,
The incense breath of patriot fields
O'ertops the languid scents of Peace!

Then still keep keen your hooks and scythe,
Ye wielders of the peaceful flail,
Tho' wintry storms the tree-tops writhe,
And scattered leaves ride on the gale,
Let not the battle harvest fail.

SEMMES![1]

[Captain Raphael Semmes, the noted commander of the Confederate privateer Alabama, on the 7th of December, 1862, captured the steamer Ariel carrying passengers for San Francisco. He allowed the vessel and passengers to proceed unharmed, but compelled the captain to sign a bond to pay two hundred and sixty thousand dollars thirty days after the independence of the Confederate Government. On December 27, the passengers of the Ariel held a meeting in San Francisco and passed a vote of thanks for Semmes's gentlemanly conduct while in possession of the vessel.]

CONFEDERATION
Of Free spoliation
With Exaltation,
I sing of thee!
And of thy later,
Sweet Peculator,
And Depredator
Of every sea.

[1] *Golden Era*, January 11, 1863.

When all abuse thee
And dare confuse thee,
I 'll still excuse thee,
Though law condemns
Thy occupation,
This plain narration
Bears attestation
Of thee, O Semmes!

What legendary,
Incendiary
Accounts that vary
Of thee were told;
What strange tradition
Of man's condition,
Through inanition
Shut in thy hold.

Thy motions elfish,
Thy conduct selfish,
Like that strange shell-fish
Who clouds with ink;
Yes, like the Cuttle,
I hide thy subtle
Attempts to scuttle
Our ships and sink.

Thy frequent dashes,
Thy waxed mustaches,
Their glory flashes
From pole to pole!
The British Nation,
At every station,
Sends invitation
For thee to coal.

With deprecation
And agitation,
And consternation,
Lest blood be spilt,
I view thy meeting,
— No courteous greeting —
Perchance a beating
From Vanderbilt!

Thy kind attention
I duly mention,
Though comprehension
Doth strangely show
That high-toned breeding
Tho' strange exceeding,
We find proceeding
From men termed "Low.

Then let us praise thee,
And still upraise thee,
Until we place thee
Beyond all harm,
In exaltation —
A-e-rostation
And high saltation,
From some yardarm.

A CAVALRY SONG[1]

O, POTENT in patriot fields,
Is the union of swiftness and force;
In the uplifted steel,
And the prick of the heel,
And the long swinging tramp of the horse.

[1] *Golden Era*, January 18, 1863.

O, the Infantry make a brave show,
With the squares that no foeman dare cross;
But their long files go down,
When the rattling hoofs drown
Their roulade with the tramp of the horse.

O, the Cannoneer's lintstocks are bright,
And the throats of their engines are hoarse;
But their thunder is dumb
When the Cavalry come,
With the lightnings that leap from the horse.

Then, up in the stirrup and ride!
No obstacles checking our course,
Till the continent's length
Is filled with the strength
Of the charging of Liberty's horse!

THE WRATH OF McDAWDLE[1]

A CONSERVATIVE LEGEND

[General George B. McClellan, in 1862, was severely criticized for his tardiness and hesitation. It was claimed that he was over-cautious, that he spent too much time in preparation, and thus gave the enemy the advantage and an opportunity to escape.]

McDawdle brooked no spoiler's wrong,
Famous in border raid and song,

But hearing the tale of outrage told,
His heart waxed hot and his eye grew cold,

And said, "Now, by my ancestral hall,
This day shall McDawdle's vengeance fall!"

[1] *Golden Era*, January 25, 1863.

So he bade them bring him his barbèd steed,
And rode from his castle gate with speed.

The high portcullis he paused beside,
And said, "With me shall a Squire ride

"With a fresher lance, lest this should bend
To some traitor's breast—which saints forfend!"

So his Squire beside him armed did go,
With an extra lance at his saddle-bow.

But when the heavy drawbridge dropped,
McDawdle tightened his rein and stopped,

And said, "Those spared in the fight, I wist,
With gyves should be manacled each wrist."

So they brought him gyves and again he sped
While his henchmen held their breath with dread.

But when he had passed the castle moat,
He checked his steed, and his brow he smote,

And said: "By'r Lady, methinks 't were well
That with me should ride a priest and bell

"To shrive the souls of the men I slay,
And mine own, should I fall in this deadly fray."

So they brought him a priest with a bell and book,
And again the earth with his gallop shook.

When he reached the spot where the caitiffs lay,
Lo, the coward knaves had stolen away,

Taking the spoil of his goodly land,
Dreading the might of his strong right hand.

'T were well for the caitiff knaves that they
Had wisely gone from McDawdle's way,

Lest he fall upon them with certain death;
And psalms went up from each caitiff's breath.

And psalms went up from McDawdle's hall,
When they saw him ride to the outer wall.

And the bard made a song of McDawdle's wrath,
And this is the song which that minstrel hath:

"Ye bold intent doth ye deed surpasse
Of ye braggart childe with ee of glasse."

THE COPPERHEAD CONVENTION[1]

SACRAMENTO, JULY 8, 1863

THERE were footprints of blood on the soil of the Free;
There were foes in the land where no foeman should be;
There were fields devastated and homesteads in flame;
And each loyal cheek caught the hue of its shame;
War's roses sprang red where each rebel heel set —
When, lo! a convention of Democrats met!

And how did they sing the brave song of their clan —
"Of rights that were equal — of freedom for man?"
What epithets burned through their pitiless scorn
Of "governing classes that masters are born?"

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), July 14, 1863.

What epithets! Listen, ye gods, to yon mouth
That writhes, as it whispers, "the glorious South!"

But came they in peace — those meek lovers of Right,
With pistols and bowie-knives tucked out of sight,
With real jars of oil for the sore Commonweal
That no Ali-Baba assassins conceal —
Was it Peace — or war — whose fond mercies are such
As pluck the weak straw from a drowning man's clutch?

We know not their motives. The quick ebbing tide
That stranded their chieftain left them at his side;
As the wave that retreats from the Seventy-four
Leaves the cockle-shells groping their way on the shore —
So their knell was the boom of the welcoming gun
That thundered the tidings that Vicksburg was won!

SCHALK![1]

[Emil Schalk, a resident of the United States, was born at Mayence, Germany, 1834, and educated at Paris. He wrote *Summary of the Art of War, 1862, Campaigns of 1862, 1863*, etc.]

WHAT do our successes balk!
"Want of simple rules," says Schalk,
"Daily I am shocked to see
Utter lack of strategy;
While the skill that art combines
(Shown in my interior lines)
And success that ever dwells
In all perfect parallels,
Prove to me, beyond a doubt,
That you 're twisted right about,
And through ignorance of art,
Yours is the defensive part;

[1] *Golden Era*, July 19, 1863.

Or, to make my sense complete,
In advancing, you retreat.
Don't you see — it 's plain as day —
That thus far you 've run away,
And your siege of New Orleans
Simply was defensive means,
While your Washington, my friend,
You must conquer to defend —
Thus your whole campaign is naught
When not logically fought!"

Right and Might at times prevail,
Lines and figures never fail!
So if you 'd your battles win —
And would properly begin —
Choose your scientific man,
Fight the European plan,
And to stop all further talk,
Win 'em by the longest Schalk.

THE YREKA SERPENT

A RHYTHMICAL DIALOGUE[1]

[Yreka, July 15, 1863. Two men in coming out of their drift on Cottonwood Creek, some twenty miles from here, a few days ago, saw on the mountain-side a snake, which they say was twenty-four feet long, and as large around as a man's body. They went toward it, when it ran up the mountain. A party is now out looking for the snake. — *Telegram in city papers.*]

STRANGER

O EXCAVATOR of the soil, O miner bold and free!
Where is the snake — the fearful snake — that late appeared to thee?
Was it a *bona-fide* snake, or only some untruth
Exploding like that firework so popular with youth?

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), July 25, 1863.

Was it a real Ophidian, or was it simply *nil*,
Of *mania a potu* born — Serpent of the Still?
Was it an Anaconda huge, or Boa of mighty strength,
Or was it but an Adder — in the details of its length?

Was it a Python — such an one as Pliny says for lunch
Would take a Roman Phalanx down, as we take Roman punch?
Or was it that more modern kind that Holmes' page displays,
Whose rattle was the favored toy of "Elsie's" baby days?

What manner of a snake was it? Speak, O mysterious man!
Proclaim the species of the snake that past thy tunnel ran —
Its length, its breadth, and whence it came, and whither did it flee;
And if extant on Tellus yet, oh, tell us where it be!

MINER

O stranger in the glossy hat, and eke in store-clothes drest!
Thy words a tunnel deep have picked within this flinty breast;
I may not rightly call those names thou dost so deftly term,
But this I know — I never yet beheld so gross a worm!

My tale begins upon a day I never can forget,
The very time those Democrats in Sacramento met —
A July day — the heated pines their fragrant sap distilled,
When tidings of a victory the hills and valleys thrilled.

The mountains laughed to split their sides, the tunnels *cracked* their jaws;
The fir trees rattled down their cones in salvos of applause;

The blue-jay screamed till he was black — when lo! as if in pain,
A hideous serpent writhed this way from Sacramento's plain.

His tail was pointed to the South, his head toward the North,
As from the Sacramento's bank he wriggled slowly forth;
But when upon the right and left the cheers began to break,
And wider, wider spread the news — still faster flew the snake!

He reached the mountains — like a dream he passed before my eyes.
O stranger! then it was I knew the secret of his size,
It was no single snake I saw; but by yon blessed sun!
These eyes beheld two serpents joined and blended into one.

Two heads this fearful reptile had; one pointed to the South;
The other pointed to the North, a hissing tongue and mouth;
But that which pointed to the South was like a turtle-dove,
And dropped from time to time a text of universal love.

Its Northern head three sides displayed, and on the first of these
I read the legend "Slavery," and on the second "Peace,"
And on the third — oh, fearful sight! — these eyes did plainly see,
Deep sunken on its copper front, the capitals "J. D."

The snake is gone — the tale is told — I view in thy affright,

O stranger with the troubled brow! thou readst the tale aright;
This serpent of protracted length — this awful snake of dread —
Was of the same convention born — the FUSION COPPERHEAD.

A FABLE FOR THE TIMES[1]

I LAY on my back in the scented grass,
Drowned in the odors that swept the plain,
Watching the reaper's sickle pass
Like summer lightning amidst the grain;

And I said, "'T is certain that Peace is sweet,
And War is cruel and useless toil —
And better the reaper of honest wheat
Than the soldier laden with sanguine spoil."

But lo, as I spake, in the upper sky,
I heard the tumult of mimic war,
And a troop of swallows came whistling by,
In chase of a hawk that flew before —

Till with baffled wing and beaten crest,
That gray guerrilla of raid and wrong,
Flew off — and back to each ransomed nest,
The heroes came in exultant song.

But one, as he neared me, dropped his wing
With a weak, uncertain, tremulous beat,
As round and round in a narrowing ring,
His circuit he 'd double and then repeat —

[1] *Golden Era*, August 2, 1863.

Till at length he dropped, like lead, in the brake,
And I sprang to my feet, but found, alas,
He was charmed by a meditative snake
That lay near me in the scented grass.

THOMAS CARLYLE AND PETER OF THE NORTH[1]

The English author, Thomas Carlyle, must have his say upon the civil war in this country. It is very brief, and appears in the August number of *Macmillan's Magazine*. Here it is: —

"ILIA AMERICANA IN NUCE"

Peter of the North (to Paul of the South). — "Paul, you unaccountable scoundrel, I find you hire your servants for life, not by the month or year, as I do! You are going straight to hell, you —!"

Paul. — "Good words, Peter! The risk is my own; I am willing to take the risk. Hire your servants by the month or day, and get straight to Heaven, leave me to my own method."

Peter. — "No, I won't. I will beat your brains out first! *(And is trying dreadfully ever since, but cannot yet manage it.")*

T. C.

May, 1863.

"PETER OF THE NORTH" TO THOMAS CARLYLE

It 's true that I hire my servant per day,
Per month, or per year — as he chooses;
While "Paul of the South" takes his bondman for life,
Without asking if he refuses,
T. C.,
Without asking if he refuses!

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), September 8, 1863.

But if you are judge of the merits alone,
We surely have right to inquire
The date of your service with "Paul of the South,"
And what is the length of your hire,
T. C.,
And what is the length of your hire!
F. B. H.

CALIFORNIA TO THE SANITARY COMMISSION[1]

WITH A DRAFT FOR "FIFTY THOUSAND," DECEMBER, 1863

THROUGHOUT the long summer our hearts shrank in doubt,
As sterile and parched as our plains with the drought,
Till your voice on the wings of the winter's first rain
Awoke heart and meadow to bounty again.

'T is yours in its freshness — the first gift that springs
From the soil overarched by these merciful wings,
As pure and less cold than the snowflake that flies
Over fields that are crimson with War's autumn dyes.

We speak not of Glory, we talk not of Fame,
We gauge not our bounty to honor or blame;
You ride with the battery wrapped in the dun;
We creep with the ambulance steadily on.

Yet stay but a moment. Our faith is the same,
Though warmed in the sunshine, or tried in the flame;
Would you say that we shrink, while your courage endures —
That we offer our *draft* as an exchange for yours?

No, perish the thought! whether sunshine or storm,
Though the matrix is broken that moulded our form;

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), December 19, 1863.

When our mills shall run dry, in the stamps that remain,
That Strength which bred Mercy shall conquer again!

SONG OF THE "CAMANCHE"[1]

[The monitor Camanche from New York arrived at San Francisco on the ship Aquila in November, 1863. The Aquila with her cargo sank at her dock in the harbor for some unknown reason. She had remained there for some time when Bret Harte wrote these verses. She was finally raised, built, and launched. Harte's "A Lay of the Launch" gives a humorous account of his presence on that occasion.]

O STRANGER, o'er this sunken wreck
Behold no risen glory;
No fragments of a battle-deck
Invite the poet's story;
Fame cannot write my name above
With Freedom's fearless fighters;
For why? this little lay of mine
Belongs to Underwriters.

You tell me that by Sumter's walls
The monitors are swinging,
And harmless from their armor falls
The thunderbolts yet ringing;
Yet, peaceful here in mud I lie
Like any sailor drunken,
Dead as a coffin-nail, or as
— My rivet-heads-die-sunken!

You say the pirate's stealthy prow
This way is slowly turning,
From tropic seas, where even now
Some luckless prize is burning.

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), January 18, 1864.

Above them gleams the Southern Cross
And constellations blinking,
While I beneath a Northern sky
With Aquila am sinking.

O, had I dropped in some deep well
Of ocean vast and mighty,
Old Neptune might have tolled my bell
Along with Amphitrite;
Or mermaids from their coral stores
Have decked my turret gayly,
Instead of filth your city pours
From sewers round me daily.

Then, stranger, rather let me hide
Where river ooze still smothers,
If locked in my disgrace abide
Some meaner faults of others!
Thou hast a paper — tell me quick
The worst — though nothing worse is;
I 'm libeled — in the Circuit Court,
Thank God! — and not in verses.

A LAY OF THE LAUNCH[1]

(After Tennyson)

[On November 14, 1864, the monitor Camanche was successfully launched. She was intended as a formidable addition to the defenses of the harbor of San Francisco. Bret Harte was one of the invited guests.]

My heart is wasted with my woe,
Camanche;
In vain I strove to see the show,
Camanche;

[1] *Californian*, November 19, 1864.

Divorced from shore — from libels free —
I came to view thy charms *per se;*
It was no maiden plunge to thee,
Camanche.

I did not see thee launched at all,
Camanche;
The crowd was large — the gate was small,
Camanche.
I stood without and cursed my fate,
The time, the tide that would not wait,
With others who had come too late,
Camanche.

Why did they send thee off so soon,
Camanche?
They should have waited until noon,
Camanche.
O cruel fate, that from my gaze
Hid wedges, props, and broken stays,
And made thy ways as "secret ways,"
Camanche.

I was thine own invited guest,
Camanche;
I missed the feast, with all the rest,
Camanche.
I missed the cold tongue, and the flow
Of eloquence and Veuve Clicquot;
I missed my watch and chain, also,
Camanche.

For when I strove to reach thy deck,
Camanche,

A hand was passed around my neck,
Camanche;
A false, false hand my beaver pressed
Upon mine eyes, and from my vest
Unhooked my chain — why tell the rest?
Camanche.

My coat was torn — the best I had,
Camanche;
I wished I, too, were ironclad,
Camanche.
They tore my coat and vest of silk,
They groaned and cried, "a bilk, a bilk!"
Rude boys and others of that ilk,
Camanche.

Thy yard was full of stumbling blocks,
Camanche;
That told a sudden fall in stocks,
Camanche.
I stood where late thy keel had slid —
I did not heed as I was bid,
Hence what thy keel had done, I did,
Camanche.

It was a bitter, frightful fall,
Camanche;
I slid some thirty feet in all,
Camanche.
Some thirty feet upon my back
I slipped along the slimy track;
They cried, "Another launch — alack!"
Camanche.

My heart was wasted with my woe,
Camanche;
I thought that I would homeward go,
Camanche.
In vain I hailed a crowded car;
They answered not my signs afar;
O day, cursed by my evil star,
Camanche.

THE FLAG-STAFF ON SHACKLEFORD ISLAND[1]

AN INCIDENT OF THE WAR

[The following incident was related in a recent lecture by the Rev. A. L. Stone, Pastor, Park Street Church, Boston: "In the early part of the war there stood on Shackleford Island, North Carolina, a high flag-staff from which floated the national banner. Of course, the secessionists soon tore this down. But there still surmounted the staff the national eagle. This was too loyal for the traitors, and after a time they succeeded in getting it down or breaking it off. Their work was hardly finished, when lo! the air quivered with the rush of lordly wings, and a majestic eagle swept down and lighted on the staff. In a few minutes the marksmen sent bullet after bullet at the royal mark. In vain. His piercing eye looked at them defiant; he rose, circled round a few feet, and settled again on his perch."]

PIERCING the blue of a southern sky,
On Shackleford Island a flagstaff rose,
And a flag that flew,
Loyal and true,
Over the heads of disloyal foes.

Fluttered the flag in the breezy air;
Sullen they gazed, but did not speak,
Till the flap of each fold,
Like a buffet bold,
Crimsoned with shame each traitor's cheek.

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), May 3, 1864.

"Down with the Abolition rag!"
Was the cry their hatred found at last;
And they tore it down
And over the town
Trailed the flag they had stripped from the mast.

"Down with the Eagle — the Yankee bird;
False in one thing, false in the whole";
So they battered down
The flag-staff's crown —
The Eagle crest of the liberty pole.

Lo! as it dropped, from the upper air
Came the rush of wings, and around the base
Of the flag-staff played
A circling shade,
And the real bird swooped to the emblem's place.

Vainly, below from the angry mob
The curse and the rifle shot went up.
Not a feather stirred
Of the royal bird
In his lonely perch on the flag-staff top.

Since that day, on Shackleford Isle,
Clothed in beauty the staff is set;
Since that day
The bird alway
Guards the spot that is sacred yet.

So, when the Nation's symbols lie
Broken, we look through our despair
To the sky that brings
The rush of wings
And the Truth that dwells in the upper air.

OF ONE WHO FELL IN BATTLE[1]

(H. A. G., JUNE 3, 1864)

By smoke-encumbered field and tangled lane,
Down roads whose dust was laid with scarlet dew,
Past guns dismounted, ragged heaps of slain,
Dark moving files, and bright blades glancing through,
All day the waves of battle swept the plain
Up to the ramparts, where they broke and cast
Thy young life quivering down, like foam before the blast.

Then sank the tumult. Like an angel's wing,
Soft fingers swept thy pulses. The west wind
Whispered fond voices, mingling with the ring
Of Sabbath bells of Peace — such peace as brave men find,
And only look for till the months shall bring
Surcease of Wrong, and fail from out the land
Bondage and shame, and Freedom's altars stand.

THE HERO OF SUGAR PINE[2]

"Oh, tell me, Sergeant of Battery B,
Oh, hero of Sugar Pine!
Some glorious deed of the battle-field,
Some wonderful feat of thine.

"Some skillful move, when the fearful game
Of battle and life was played
On yon grimy field, whose broken squares
In scarlet and black are laid."

[1] *Californian*, August 6, 1864.
[2] *Californian*, August 20, 1864.

"Ah, stranger, here at my gun all day,
I fought till my final round
Was spent, and I had but powder left,
And never a shot to be found;

"So I trained my gun on a rebel piece:
So true was my range and aim,
A shot from his cannon entered mine
And finished the load of the same!"

"Enough! Oh, Sergeant of Battery B,
Oh, hero of Sugar Pine!
Alas! I fear that thy cannon's throat
Can swallow much more than mine!"

ST. VALENTINE IN CAMP[1]

We had borne the wintry sieges in our swamp-encircled camp,
When a step surprised the sentry in his measured tread and tramp,

And across the broad abatis swarmed the skirmishes of spring,
And the ivy's scaling ladders on the scarp hung quivering;

Till the bold invader's colors shook on every rocky wall,
And the buds with wedding carols drowned the bugle's warning call.

Then a sudden vision thrilled me, and I seemed to stand again
With my hand upon the ploughshare on the far New England plain.

[1] *Evening Bulletin* (San Francisco), March 1, 1865.

Blithely sang the lark above me, and among the gathered kine
Sang the milkmaid in the farmyard, sang the song of Valentine;

Or across the distant meadow, as of old she seemed to glide —
She whose troth with mine was plighted when we wandered side by side.

Where the wanton winds of summer stirred the maple's leafy crown,
Or the gusty breath of Autumn shook the rugged walnuts down.

But between me and my vision rise the graves upon the hill
Where my comrades lie together, and the winds are hushed and still.

They to whom the lark's blithe carol, and the songs of love are dead;
Vain to them the white encampment of the crocus o'er their head;

And my cheek is flushed with crimson — better that a stranger's hand
Guide the coulter in the furrow, if mine own shall wield the brand!

What to me the rattling walnuts in Love's consecrated shade,
Who have heard the bullets dropping in the dusky ambuscade?

What to me if greenly flourish newer life within the wood,
If the baby leaves are nourished in the dew of brothers' blood?

Blithely lift your tuneful voices, blithely sing and merrily
Chant your marriage morning pæans, O ye birds, but not for me!

Till the Nation's dreary winter shall have passed, and time shall bring
Through the Autumn's smoke of battle glimpses of the Nation's Spring;

Till a people's benediction mingle with the songs above,
That shall hail the glad espousals of a long estrangèd love;

Then a symbol of that Union shall my darling fitly wear,
Hickory leaves and orange blossoms wreathed together in her hair.

SCHEMMELFENNIG [1]

[General Alexander Schemmelfennig commanded the forces that first entered Charleston upon its evacuation by the Confederates in 1865.]

BRAVE Teuton, though thy awful name
Is one no common rhyme can mimic,
Though in despair the trump of Fame
Evades thy painful patronymic —
Though orators forego thy praise,
And timid bards by tongue or pen ig-
Nore thee — thus alone I raise
Thy name in song, my Schemmelfennig!

What though no hecatombs may swell
With mangled forms thy path victorious;

[1] *Californian*, April 1, 1865.

Though Charleston to thee bloodless fell,
Wert thou less valiant or less glorious?
Thou took'st tobacco — cotton — grain —
And slaves — they say a hundred and ten nig-
Gers were captives in thy train
And swelled thy pomp, my Schemmelfennig!

Let Asboth mourn his name unsung,
And Schurz his still unwritten story;
Let Blenker grieve the silent tongue,
And Zagonyi forego his glory;
Ye are but paltry farthing lamps,
Your lights the fickle marsh or fen ig-
Nus fatuus of Southern swamps,
Beside the sun of Schemmelfennig!

THE VENDUE OF JEFFERSON DAVIS [1]

THE CAUSE

Of all the tyrants whose actions swell
The pages of history, and tell
How well they fought, and how brave they fell
In battle assault or siege, pell-mell,
Or blew up their foes and themselves as well,
By way of a general ridding,
Commend us to Jefferson D. who spread
On the "outer wall" a flag of red,
And called to an auction sale instead
The wretches who did his *bidding*.

And yet, so fickle 's the human mind,
In fact or fiction you 'll always find

[1] *Californian*, April 15, 1865.

The popular taste is most inclined
To the traitor that 's most consistent,
And the standard drama declares the fact
That he ought to die with his weapon hack't,
Or fall on his sword in the final act,
As Brutus once did in his tent.

Laugh at the principle if you will,
One feels a kind of indefinite thrill
For the hunted pirate who cowers still
O'er his magazine with an iron will
And a pistol cocked and loaded,
And knows that capture will bring the flash,
The swift upheaval, and awful crash,
The blinding smoke, and the sullen splash,
But never dreamed of selling for cash,
As certain people we know did;
Alas! that the theory and the rash
Example are both exploded.

No doubt that Samson essayed to crown
In some such manner his life's renown
In that final act which they say brought down
The house on his last appearance;
Or, if further illustrations you lack,
I 've been keeping the scorpion figure back,
Who, girdled with fire, is never slack
In effecting his mortal clearance.

But there are skeptical folk who doubt
If Jefferson Davis really sold out,
On the eve of his final defeat and rout,
Such trifles as pots and kettles;
Or ever his proud soul stooped so low,
While girding his loins for a final blow,

To lend himself to a Yankee show,
Whose very detail belittles,
And call the tale a *canard* — as near
What really is genuine and sincere
As the duck of Vaucauson might appear
To the one that digests its victuals.

But ah! the poet, whose prophet eyes
Can look through the battle-clouds that rise,
Sees not the traders who sacrifice
Such homely trifles as housewives prize,
But a symbol of something greater —
The selling out of a mansion built
On the soil where a Nation's blood is spilt,
With Fate for an auctioneer, and Guilt
Close by, an amazed spectator.

To such there comes a terrible awe,
To think that the people who gathered saw
The mighty arm of some Northern Thor
Uplifting the auction hammer,
And knocking down with each terrible blow
Some things that the catalogue did n't show,
In words that the reader will find below
Mixed up with the vendor's clamor:

THE SALE

"Going, gentlemen! — going, gone!
The entire furniture, slightly worn,
And the family portraits these walls adorn,
Well worthy of any man's — hanging;
And some English carpets as good as new,
A little down-trodden, but then they 'll do

If you let Grant shake 'em and put 'em through
The usual beating and banging!

"Who bids for a genealogical tree—
A beautiful piece of embroidery,
A very first family's pedigree?
What a chance for our youthful scions!
Who bids? As the article 's useless now
I 'll take — 'five dollars!' — too bad, I vow!
Well, put it in greenbacks! What name? eh, how?
Ah, beg your pardon! — 'Lord Lyons!'

"A family Bible I offer next,
Which opens itself at a certain text
About Onesimus that once vext
The church as a *casus belli;*
And all those passages stricken out
Which provoke research in this age of doubt:
How much? — Ah, thank you? — 't is yours, my stout
Old Cardinal — Antonelli!

"Now here 's an article one might skip,
But the lot goes together — a driver's whip,
And, barring some stains on the thong and tip,
It 's still in complete preservation:
Who bids? where 's the man who 's afraid to speak loud?
What, you, little white-coat, just back in the crowd,
With the yellow mustachios and bearing so proud!
Going, gone! — to the Austrian Legation!

"Going, gentlemen — going, gone!
The household gods of a man forlorn,
For the benefit of the wives that mourn,
And of children's children, yet unborn,
And of bonds that none shall sever;

The house, and all that the house contains,
The wandering ghosts and their vengeful manes,
The naked walls and their blots and stains,
And even the title that now obtains
With an U. S. Grant forever!"

IN MEMORIAM[1]

JEFFERSON DAVIS

Repudiator, Speculator, Dictator;
Who enjoyed the distinction of being the first
And last
President of the Southern Confederacy.
A Christian and Chivalrous Gentleman,
He starved Union Captives in his Prisons,
And sanctioned the Massacre of Fort Pillow.
But his manners were courtly and elegant,
And his State papers models of excellence.
He was remarkable for his executive wisdom:
To provide material for his forces,
He ordered corn to be planted instead of cotton,
Which enabled Sherman to march through Georgia.
He perpetuated a Slave Empire,
Whose bondsmen were guides to the Union Armies.
Consistent in his inconsistencies,
He connived at the assassination of the only man
Who could have saved him from the gallows.
The incarnation of dignity and heroism,
He was taken disguised in his wife's petticoats,
Claiming exemption from capture
On the grounds of his femininity.
As such, friends, respect his weakness,
And that of the few who still admire him.

[1] *Californian*, May 20, 1865.

THE LAMENT OF THE BALLAD-WRITER[1]

Air: "Just Before the Battle, Mother"

Now the battle 's over, Mother,
And your tears no longer start,
Really, it is my opinion
You and I had better part.
Farewell, Mother, if forever,
Your affection I resign,
Gone the days when just your blessing
Brought me fifty cents a line.

Farewell, O Maternal Fiction!
Thou whose far-parental sigh
Home has brought the youthful soldier,
Time and time again to die.
Farewell, Mother, you may never
In the future, peaceful years,
Bring a sob from private boxes —
Steep a dress-circle in tears.

Farewell, O thou gentle sister!
Thou, who in my cunning hand,
Didst deliver pious sermons,
Mild, innocuous, and bland;
Never more from thee I 'll borrow
Moral sentiments to preach,
Nor shall "morrow" rhyme with "sorrow"
In thy bitter parting speech.

Farewell, O devoted Maiden!
Thou who for the country, true,
Sacrificed not only lover
But thy Lindley Murray, too;

[1] *Californian*, October 7, 1865.

Incoherent was my logic,
Wild and vague thy words I fear,
Yet the pit would still encore thee,
And the galleries would cheer.

Farewell, all ye facile phrases,
Gags and sentimental cant!
Names that took the place of ideas —
Sherman, Sheridan, and Grant;
Gone the days when schoolboy jingles
Took the place of manly talk,
When the "thought that breathed" was puffy,
And the word that burned — burnt cork.

Just before the battle, Mother,
Then my cheapest figure told;
While the rebel stood before us,
Then my glitter looked like gold.
Now this "cruel war is over,"
All inflated thought must fall;
Mother, dear, your boy must henceforth
Write sound sense, or not at all.

A THANKSGIVING RETROSPECT[1]

Well! Charge your glasses! — Softly, friends,
The toast we drink to-night:
"The vacant chair," that holds the post
Of honor on our right.
"The vacant chair" — why now so grave
Your looks once bright with love?
What though our circle narrows here,
It widens still above.

[1] *Californian*, December 9, 1865.

We drink to him who joins the host
That left our hearth before —
Dear hands that once have clasped our own
Shall touch his on that shore;
The grandsire whose unflinching soul
Went up from Concord fight,
Shall welcome him whose youthful arm
Last year struck home for Right!

That though he lived where barren hills
Were white with winter snows,
Where man through stubborn toil alone
To higher nature rose:
He sleeps where never click of hail
Or ice their changes ring,
But consonants of Winter yield
To open-vowels of Spring.

Above him drifts the cotton-bloom
Knee-deep above his grave;
The shroud that veils his southern bed
The north-wind never gave.
His sable mourners tread a shore
Enfranchised from their toil —
Thank God! (through valor such as his)
Our own — no foreign soil!

Then charge your glasses full, and pour
A stream as red and free
As that which from his youthful veins
Was poured for Liberty.
To-night no sorrow drown our thanks —
To-morrow tears may fall
For him who fills the vacant chair,
Yet sleeps near Tybee's wall.

LATER POEMS

1871–1902

CHICAGO

(THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION OF OCTOBER 8-10, 1871)

BLACKENED and bleeding, helpless, panting, prone,
On the charred fragments of her shattered throne
Lies she who stood but yesterday alone.

Queen of the West!.by some enchanter taught
To lift the glory of Aladdin's court,
Then lose the spell that all that wonder wrought.

Like her own prairies by some chance seed sown,
Like her own prairies in one brief day grown,
Like her own prairies in one fierce night mown.

She lifts her voice, and in her pleading call
We hear the cry of Macedon to Paul —
The cry for help that makes her kin to all.

But haply with wan fingers may she feel
The silver cup hid in the proffered meal —
The gifts her kinship and our loves reveal.

BILL MASON'S BRIDE

HALF an hour till train time, sir,
An' a fearful dark time, too;
Take a look at the switch lights, Tom,
Fetch in a stick when you're through.

"On time?" well, yes, I guess so —
Left the last station all right —
She 'll come round the curve a-flyin';
Bill Mason comes up to-night.

You know Bill? No! He 's engineer,
Been on the road all his life —
I 'll never forget the mornin'
He married his chuck of a wife.
'T was the summer the mill hands struck —
Just off work, every one;
They kicked up a row in the village
And killed old Donovan's son.

Bill had n't been married mor 'n an hour,
Up comes a message from Kress,
Orderin' Bill to go up there,
And bring down the night express.
He left his gal in a hurry,
And went up on number one,
Thinking of nothing but Mary,
And the train he had to run.

And Mary sat down by the window
To wait for the night express;
And, sir, if she had n't 'a' done so,
She 'd been a widow, I guess.
For it must 'a' been nigh midnight
When the mill hands left the Ridge —
They come down — the drunken devils! —
Tore up a rail from the bridge.
But Mary heard 'em a-workin'
And guessed there was somethin' wrong —
And in less than fifteen minutes,
Bill's train it would be along!

She could n't come here to tell *us:*
A mile — it would n't 'a' done —
So she jest grabbed up a lantern,
And made for the bridge alone.
Then down came the night express, sir,
And Bill was makin' her climb!
But Mary held the lantern,
A-swingin' it all the time.

Well! by Jove! Bill saw the signal,
And he stopped the night express,
And he found his Mary cryin'
On the track, in her weddin' dress;
Cryin' an' laughin' for joy, sir,
An' holdin' on to the light —
Hello! here 's the train — good-bye, sir,
Bill Mason 's on time to-night.

DEACON JONES'S EXPERIENCE

(ARKANSAS CONFERENCE)

1874

YE'RE right when you lays it down, Parson,
Thet the flesh is weak and a snare;
And to keep yer plow in the furrow —
When yer cattle begins to rare —
Ain't no sure thing. And, between us,
The same may be said of prayer.

Why, I stood the jokes, on the river,
Of the boys, when the critters found
Thet I 'd jined the Church, and the snicker
Thet, maybe ye mind, went round,
The day I set down with the mourners,
In the old camp-meetin' ground!

I stood all that, and I reckon
I might at a pinch stood more —
For the boys, they represents Bael,
And I stands as the Rock of the Law;
And it seemed like a moral scrimmage,
In holdin' agin their jaw.

But thar 's crosses a Christian suffers,
As hez n't got that pretense —
Things with no moral purpose,
Things ez hez got no sense;
Things ez, somehow, no profit
Will cover their first expense.

Ez how! I was jest last evenin'
Addressin' the Throne of Grace,
And mother knelt in the corner,
And each of the boys in his place —
When that sneakin' pup of Keziah's
To Jonathan's cat giv chase!

I never let on to mind 'em,
I never let on to hear;
But driv that prayer down the furrow
With the cat hidin' under my cheer,
And Keziah a-whisperin', "Sic her!"
And mother a-sayin', "You dare!"

I asked fer a light fer the heathen,
To guide on his narrer track,
With that dog and that cat jest walzin',
And Jonathan's face jest black,
When the pup made a rush and the kitten —
Dropped down on the small of my back.

Yes, I think, with the Lud's assistance,
I might have continered then,
If, gettin' her holt, that kitten
Hed n't dropped her claws in me — when
It somehow reached the "Old Adam,"
And I jumped to my feet with "Amen."

So, ye 're right when you say it, Parson,
Thet the flesh is weak and a snare;
And to keep yer plow in the furrow —
When yer cattle begins to rare —
Ain't no sure thing. And, between us,
I say it 's jest so with prayer.

THE MAY QUEEN

(ADAPTED TO A BACKWARD SEASON)

If you're waking, call me early, call me early, mother dear,
And see that my room is warm, mother, and the fire is burning clear;
And tallow my nose once more, mother, once more ere you go away,
For I 'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I 'm to be Queen o' the May.

It froze so hard last night, mother, that really I could n't break
The ice in my little pitcher, mother, till I thought the poker to take;
You 'll find it there on the hearth, mother — but oh, let that hot brick stay,
For I 'm to be Queen o' the May, mother, I 'm to be Queen o' the May.

"Hail and farewell!" So the proud Roman cried
O'er his dead hero. "Hail," but not "farewell."
With each high thought thou walkest side by side;
We feel thee, touch thee, know who wrought the spell!

THE WANDERINGS OF ULYSSES

AS REPORTED BY MARY JONES, MAID TO MRS. GRANT

WE'RE here, dear, and what with our glories
And honor, you 'll know by that sign
Why we have n't met Mrs. Sartoris
And I have n't written a line;
Why, what with Dukes giving receptions,
And going in state to Guildhall,
You ain't got the faintest conceptions
Of what we are doing at all!

I 've just took the card of a Countess,
I 've said "Not-at-home" to an Earl;
As for Viscounts and Lords the amount is
Too absurd. Why there is n't a girl
In Galena who would n't be hating
Your friend Mary Jones, who now writes,
While behind her this moment, in waiting,
Stands the gorgeousest critter in tights.

He 's the valet of Viscount Fitz Doosem;
He wears eppylets and all that;
Has an awful nosegay in his bosom;
His legs are uncommonly fat.
He called our Ulysses "My Master,"
Just think of it! — but I stopped that.
He tried to be halfway familiar,
But I busted the crown of his hat!

We 're to dine out at Windsor on Friday;
We take tea with the Princess next week;
Of course I shall make myself tidy
And fix myself up, so to speak.
"I presume I 'm addressing the daughter
Of America's late President?"
Said a Duke to me last night; you oughter
Have seen how he stammered and — went.

The fact is the "help" of this city
Ain't got no style, nohow; why, dear,
Though I should n't say it, I pity
These Grants, for they *do* act so queer.
Why, Grant smoked and drinked with a Marshal,
Like a Senator, and Missus G.,
Well! — though I 'm inclined to be partial,
She yawned through a royal levee.

Why, only last night, at a supper,
He sat there so simple and still,
That, had I the pen of a — Tupper,
I could n't express my shame — till
An Earl, he rose up and says, winking,
"You 're recalling your battles, no doubt?"
Says Ulysses, "I only was thinking
Of the Stanislaus and the dug-out.

"And the scow that I ran at Knight's Ferry,
And the tolls that I once used to take."
Imagine it, dear! Them 's the very
Expression he used. Why, I quake
As I think of it — till a great Duchess
Holds out her white hand and says "shake";
Or words of that meaning; for such is
Them English to folks whom they take.

There 's dear Mr. Pierrepont; yet think, love,
In spite of his arms and his crest,
And his liveries — all he may prink, love,
Don't bring him no nearer the best;
For they 're tired of shamming and that thing
They 've had for some eight hundred year,
And really perhaps it 's a blessing
These Grants are uncommonly queer.

As for me, dear, — don't let it go further, —
But — umph! — there 's the son of a peer
Who 's waiting for me till his father
Shall give him a thousand a year;
Tha castle we 'll live in, as I know,
Is the size of the White House, my dear,
And you 'll just tell them folks from Ohio
That I think we will settle down here.

THAT EBREW JEW

THERE once was a tradesman renowned as a screw
Who sold pins and needles and calicoes too,
Till he built up a fortune — the which as it grew
Just ruined small traders the whole city through —
Yet one thing he knew,
Between me and you,
There was a distinction
'Twixt Christian and Jew.

Till he died in his mansion — a great millionaire —
The owner of thousands; but nothing to spare
For the needy and poor who from hunger might drop,
And only a pittance to clerks in his shop.

But left it all to
A Lawyer, who knew
A subtile distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

This man was no trader, but simply a friend
Of this Gent who kept shop and who, nearing his end,
Handed over a million — 't was only his due,
Who discovered this contrast 'twixt Ebrew and Jew.
For he said, "If you view
This case as I do,
There *is* a distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

"For the Jew is a man who will make money through
His skill, his *finesse*, and his capital too,
And an Ebrew 's a man that we Gentiles can 'do,'
So you see there 's a contrast 'twixt Ebrew and Jew.
Ebrew and Jew,
Jew and Ebrew,
There 's a subtile distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew."

So he kept up his business of needles and pins,
But always one day he atoned for his sins,
But never the same day (for that would n't do),
That the Jew faced his God with the awful Ebrew.
For this man he knew,
Between me and you,
There was a distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

So he sold soda-water and shut up the fount
Of a druggist whose creed was the Speech on the Mount;
And he trafficked in gaiters and ruined the trade
Of a German whose creed was by great Luther made.

But always he knew,
Between me and you,
A subtile distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

Then he kept a hotel — here his trouble began —
In a fashion unknown to his primitive plan;
For the rule of this house to his manager ran,
"Don't give entertainment to Israelite man."
Yet the manager knew,
Between me and you,
No other distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

"You may give to John Morissey supper and wine,
And Madame N. N. to your care I 'll resign;
You 'll see that those Jenkins from Missouri Flat
Are properly cared for; but recollect that
Never a Jew
Who 's not an Ebrew
Shall take up his lodgings
Here at the Grand U.

"You 'll allow Miss McFlimsey her diamonds to wear;
You 'll permit the Van Dams at the waiters to swear;
You 'll allow Miss Décolleté to flirt on the stair;
But as to an Israelite — pray have a care;
For, between me and you,
Though the doctrine is new,
There 's a business distinction
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew."

Now, how shall we know? Prophet, tell us, pray do,
Where the line of the Hebrew fades into the Jew?
Shall we keep out Disraeli and take Rothschild in?
Or snub Meyerbeer and think Verdi a sin?

What shall we do?
O, give us a few
Points to distinguish
'Twixt Ebrew and Jew.

There was One — Heaven help us! — who died in man's place,
With thorns on his forehead, but Love in his face:
And when "foxes had holes" and birds in the air
Had their nests in the trees, there was no spot to spare
For this "King of the Jews."
Did the Romans refuse
This right to the Ebrews
Or only to Jews?

THE LEGEND OF GLEN HEAD

(RELATED BY A CAUTIOUS OBSERVER)

THEY say — though I know not what value to place
On the strength of mere local report —
That this was her home — though the tax list gives space,
I observe, to no fact of the sort.

But here she would sit; on that wheel spin her flax, —
I here may remark that her hair
Was compared to that staple, — yet as to the *facts*
There is no witness willing to swear.

Yet here she would sit, by that window reserved
For her vines — like a "bower of bloom,"
You 'll remark I am quoting — the *fact* I 've observed
Is that plants attract flies to the room.

The house and the window, the wheel and the flax
Are still in their *status* preserved, —

And yet, what conclusion to draw from these facts,
I regret I have never observed.

Her parents were lowly, her lover was poor;
In brief it appears their sole plea
For turning Fitz-William away from her door
Was that he was still poorer than she.

Yet why worldly wisdom was so cruel *then*,
And perfectly proper *to-day*,
I am quite at a loss to conceive, — but my pen
Is digressing. They drove him away.

Yon bracket supported the light she would trim
Each night to attract by its gleam,
Moth-like, her Fitz-William, who fondly would swim
To her side — seven miles and upstream.

I know not how great was the length of his limb
Or how strong was her love-taper's glow;
But it seems an uncommon long distance to swim
And the light of a candle to show.

When her parents would send her quite early to bed
She would place on yon bench with great care
A sandwich, instead of the crumbs that she fed,
To her other wild pets that came there.

One night — though the date is not given, in view
Of the fact that no inquest was found —
A corpse was discovered — Fitz-William's? — a few
Have alleged — drifting out on the Sound.

At the news she fell speechless, and, day after day,
She sank without protest or moan;

Till at last, like a foam-flake, she melted away —
So 't is said, for her grave is unknown.

Twenty years from that day to the village again
Came a mariner portly and gray,
Who was married at Hempstead — the record is plain
Of the justice — on that fatal day.

He hired the house, and regretted the fate
Of the parties whose legend I 've told.
He made some repairs, — for 't is proper to state
That the house was exceedingly old.

His name was McCorkle — now, while there is naught
To suggest of Fitz-William in that,
You 'll remember, if living, our Fitz-William ought
To have grown somewhat grayer and fat.

But this is conjecture. The fact still remains
Of the vines and the flax as before.
And knowing your weakness I 've taken some pains
To present them, my love, nothing more.

"KITTY HAWK"

A MARINE DIALOGUE

[Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, a small settlement and signal station, was, in November, 1877, the scene of the wreck of the United States man-of-war Huron, and the loss of almost all the crew. The fact that apparently no effort was made at rescue, and the finding for many miles along the shore of the bodies stripped of all valuables, led to considerable comment.]

Poet *Kitty*

POET

WHERE the seas worn out with chasing, at thy white feet
sink embracing, thou still sittest, coldly facing,
Kitty Hawk!

Facing, gazing seaward ever, on each weak or strong endeavor, but in grief, or pity, never,
Kitty Hawk!

Eagles, sea-gulls round thee flying, land birds spent with speed and dying, even Man to thee outcrying,
Kitty Hawk!

All thou seest, all thou hearest, yet thou carest naught nor fearest, flesh nor fowl to thee is dearest,
Kitty Hawk!

Art thou human? art thou woman? art thou dead to love and to man more than all relentless, ever?
Kitty Hawk!

Hast thou wrongs to right, O Kitty? wrongs that move the soul to pity? tell to me thy mournful ditty,
Kitty Hawk!

Tell me all! how some false lover, vagrant ship-boy, sailor rover, left, bereft thee, threw thee over,
Kitty Hawk!

For some Antipodean savage, left thy rage the shore to ravage (with a faint idea of salvage),
Kitty Hawk!

How thy vague but tragic story clothes the sandy promontory, calls in accents monitory,
Kitty Hawk!

How thy feline appellation, in accipitrine combination, most *befits a rhymed* narration,
Kitty Hawk!

KITTY

Festive tramp! around me prying — man with hair unkempt
and flying —youth with neck and head retractile,
Like a clam.

Draw within thy soft inclosure, stop this cerebral exposure,
for that 's not the kind of hairpin
That I am.

If you're me apostrophizing, with this attitudinizing,
prithee, hasten your uprising,
And in time,

On this beach, which is the Station's, leave some certain indentations — " footprints " for some sailing brother,
Who might rhyme!

For my name is Jane Maria, and my father, Kezuriah,
though he greatly might admire,
All your talk,

As one of the town officials, might prefer that his initials
should appear, just as he writes them —
K. T. Hawk.

MISS EDITH HELPS THINGS ALONG

" My sister 'll be down in a minute, and says you 're to wait,
if you please,
And says I might stay till she came, if I 'd promise her
never to tease.
Nor speak till you spoke to me first. But that 's nonsense,
for how would you know
What she told me to say, if I did n't? Don't you really
and *truly think* so?

"And then you 'd feel strange here alone! And you would n't know just where to sit;
For that chair is n't strong on its legs, and we never use it a bit.
We keep it to match with the sofa. But Jack says it would be like you
To flop yourself right down upon it and knock out the very last screw.

"S'pose you try? I won't tell. You 're afraid to! Oh! you 're afraid they would think it was mean!
Well, then, there 's the album — that 's pretty, if you 're sure that your fingers are clean.
For sister says sometimes I daub it; but she only says that when she 's cross.
There 's her picture. You know it? It 's like her; but she ain't as good-looking, of course!

"This is me. It 's the best of 'em all. Now, tell me, you 'd never have thought
That once I was little as that? It 's the only one that could be bought —
For that was the message to Pa from the photograph man where I sat —
That he would n't print off any more till he first got his money for that.

"What? Maybe you 're tired of waiting. Why, often she 's longer than this.
There 's all her back hair to do up and all of her front curls to friz.
But it 's nice to be sitting here talking like grown people, just you and me.
Do you think you 'll be coming here often? Oh, do! But *don't* come like Tom Lee.

"Tom Lee. Her last beau. Why, my goodness! He used to be here day and night,
Till the folks thought that he'd be her husband; and Jack says that gave him a fright.
You won't run away, then, as he did? for you're not a rich man, they say.
Pa says you are as poor as a church mouse. Now, are you? And how poor are they?

"Ain't you glad that you met me? Well, I am; for I know now your hair *isn't* red.
But what there is left of it's mousy, and not what that naughty Jack said.
But there! I must go. Sister's coming. But I wish I could wait, just to see
If she ran up to you and she kissed you in the way that she used to kiss Lee."

THE DEAD POLITICIAN

FIFTH WARD

"'WHO's dead?' Ye want to know
Whose is this funeral show—
This A 1 corteg'?
Well, it was Jim Adair,
And the remains's hair
Sported a short edge!

"When a man dies like Jim,
There 's no expense of him
We boys are sparing.
In life he hated fuss,
But— as he 's left to us—
Them plumes he 's wearing\

"All the boys here, you see,
Chock full each carriage!
Only one woman. She—
Cousin by marriage.

"Who was this Jim Adair?
Who? Well, you've got me there!
Reckon one of them 'air
Fogy 'old res'dents!'
Who? Why, that corpse you see
Ridin' so peacefully,
Head o' this jamboree—
'Lected three Pres'dents!

"Who was he? Ask the boys
Who made the biggest noise,
Rynders or Jimmy?
Who, when his hat he'd fling,
Knew how the 'Ayes' would ring,
Oh, no! not Jimmy!

"Who was he? Ask the Ward
Who hed the rules aboard,
All parliament'ry?
Who ran the delegate,
That ran the Empire State,
And—just as sure as fate—
Ran the whole 'kentry?

"Who was he? S'pose you try
That chap as wipes his eye
In that hack's corner.
Ask him—the only man
That agin Jimmy ran—
Now his chief mourner!

"Well — that 's the last o' Jim.
Yes, we *was* proud o' him."

OLD TIME AND NEW

(Contributed to the first number of the *Time Magazine*, April, 1879)

How well we know that figure limned
On every almanac's first page,
The beard unshorn, the hair untrimmed,
The gaunt limbs bowed and bent with age;
That well-known glass with sands run out,
That scythe that he was wont to wield
With shriveled arm, which made us doubt
His power in Life's harvest field!

Ah, him we know! But who comes here
Pranked with the fashion of the town?
This springald, who in jest or jeer,
Tries on old Time's well-frosted crown!
Vain is his paint! Youth's freshest down
Through penciled wrinkles shows too soon
The bright mischievous face of Clown,
Beneath the mask of Pantaloon!

A doubtful jest, howe'er well played,
To mock the show of fleeting breath
With youth's light laugh, and masquerade
This gaunt stepbrother of grim Death!
Is this a moralist to teach
The equal fate of small and large?
Peace! Yet — one moment — yield him speech
Before we give the scamp in charge!

"I crave no grace from those who dream
Time only *was*, and from the past

Still draw the wisdom that they deem
Will only live and only last.
Time is not *old*, as all who 've tried
To kill or cheat him must attest;
And outward symbols cannot hide
The same firm pulse that stirs your breast.

"The old stock properties you preach
To truer symbols must pay tithe;
M'Cormick's reapers better teach
My truths than your old-fashioned scythe.
The racing 'Timer's' slender vane
That marks the *quarter seconds* pass,
Marks, too, its moral quite as plain
As e'er was drawn in sand through glass.

"So if I bring in comelier dress
And newer methods, things less new,
I claim that honored name still less
To be consistent than be true.
If mine be not the face that 's cast
In every almanac and rhyme,
Look through them — all that there will last
You 'll find within these leaves of 'TIME!'"

UNDER THE GUNS

UNDER the guns of the Fort on the Hill
Daisies are blossoming, buttercups fill;
Up the gray ramparts the scaling vine flings
High its green ladders, and falters and clings
Under the guns,
Under the guns,
Under the guns of the Fort on the Hill.

Under the guns of the Fort on the Hill
Once shook the earth with the cannonade's thrill,
Once trod these buttercups feet that, now still,
Lie all at rest in their trench by the mill.
Under the guns,
Under the guns,
Under the guns of the Fort on the Hill.

Under the guns of the Fort on the Hill
Equal the rain falls on good and on ill,
Soft lies the sunshine, still the brook runs,
Still toils the Husbandman — under the guns,
Under the guns,
Under the guns,
Under the guns of the Fort on the Hill.

Under the guns of Thy Fort on the Hill
Lord! in Thy mercy we wait on Thy will;
Lord! is it War that Thy wisdom best knows,
Lord! is it Peace, that Thy goodness still shows,
Under the guns,
Under the guns,
Under the guns of Thy Fort on the Hill?

COMPENSATION

THE Poet sings on the plain,
The Trader toils in the mart,
One envies the other's gain,
One stares at the other's art.

Yet each one reaches his goal,
And the Critic sneers as they pass,
And each of the three in his soul
Believes the other an ass.

OUR LAUREATE

(Contributed to the Holmes number of the *Critic*, issued on the twenty-ninth of August, 1884 — the seventy-fifth anniversary of the birth of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes.)

ONE day from groves of pine and palm,
The poets of the sky and cover
Had come to greet with song and psalm
The whip-poor-will — their woodland lover.
All sang their best, but one clear note
That fairly voiced their admiration
Was his — who only sang by rote —
The mock-bird's modest imitation.

So we, who 'd praise the bard who most
Is poet of each high occasion,
Who 'd laud our laureate, and toast
The blithe Toast-Master of the Nation, —
To celebrate his fête to-day,
In vain each bard his praise rehearses:
The best that we can sing or say
Is but an echo of *his* verses.

SCOTCH LINES TO A. S. B.[1]

(FROM AN UNINTELLIGENT FOREIGNER)

WE twa hae heard the gowans sing,
Sae saft and dour, sae fresh and gey;
And paidlet in the brae, in Spring,
To scent the new-mown "Scots wha hae."

[1] *Bret Harte's reply to some jesting stanzas in the vernacular written by his artist friend, Alexander Stuart Boyd.*

But maist we loo'ed at e'en to chase
The pibroch through each wynd and close,
Or climb the burn to greet an' face
The skeendhus gangin' wi' their Joes.

How aft we said "Eh, Sirs!" and "Mon!"
Likewise "Whateffer" — apropos
Of nothing. And pinned faith upon
"Aiblins" — though *why* we didna know.

We 've heard nae mon say "gowd" for "gold,"
And yet wi' all our tongues up-curled,
We — like the British drum-beat — rolled
Our "R's" round all the speaking worruld.

How like true Scots we didna care
A bawbee for the present tense,
But said "we will be" when we *were*,
'T was bonny — but it wasna sense.

And yet, "ma frien" and "trusty frere,"
We 'll take a right gude "Willie Waught"
(Tho' what *that* may be is not clear,
Nor where it can be made or bought).

THE ENOCH OF CALAVERAS

Well, dog my cats! Say, stranger,
You must have traveled far!
Just flood your lower level
And light a fresh cigar.
Don't tell me in this weather,
You hoofed it all the way?
Well, slice my liver lengthways!
Why, stranger, what 's to pay?

Huntin' yer wife, you tell me;
  Well, now, dog-gone my skin!
She thought you dead and buried,
  And then bestowed her fin
Upon another fellow!
  Just put it there, old pard!
Some fellows strike the soft things,
  But you have hit it hard.

I 'm right onto your feelin's,
  I know how it would be,
If my own shrub slopped over
  And got away from me.
Say, stranger, that old sage hen,
  That 's cookin' thar inside,
Is warranted the finest wool,
  And just a square yard wide.

I would n't hurt yer, pardner,
  But I tell *you*, no man
Was ever blessed as I am
  With that old pelican.
It 's goin' on some two year
  Since she was j'ined to me,
She was a widder prior,
  Her name was Sophy Lee —

Good God! old man, what 's happened?
  Her? She? Is that the one?
That 's her? Your wife, you tell me?
  Now reach down for yer gun.
I never injured no man,
  And no man me, but squealed,
And any one who takes her
  Must do it d——d well heeled!

Listen? Surely. Certainly
I'll let you look at her.
Peek through the door, she's in thar,
Is that your furnitur'?
Speak, man, quick! You're mistaken!
No! Yours! You recognize
My wife, your wife, the same one?
The man who says so, lies!

Don't mind what I say, pardner,
I'm not much on the gush,
But the thing comes down on me
Like fours upon a flush.
If that's your wife — hold — steady!
That bottle, now my coat,
She'll think me dead as you were.
My pipe. Thar. I'm afloat.

But let me leave a message.
No; tell her that I died:
No, no; not that way, either,
Just tell her that I cried.
It don't rain much. Now, pardner,
Be to her what I've been,
Or, by the God that hates you,
You'll see me back again!

"FREE SILVER AT ANGEL'S"

I RESIDE at Table Mountain, and my name is **Truthful** James,
I have told the tale of "William" and of "Ah **Sin's**" *sinful* games;

I have yarned of "Our Society," and certain gents I know,
Yet my words were plain and simple, and I never yet was low.

Thar is high-toned gents, ink-slingers; thar is folks as will allow
Ye can't reel off a story onless they 've taught ye how;
Till they get the word *they 're* wantin', *they 're* allus cryin' "Whoa!"
All the while their mule is pullin' (that 's their "Pegasus," you know).

We ain't built that way at Angel's — but why pursue this theme?
When things is whirling round us in a wild delusive dream;
When "fads" on "bikes" go scorchin' down — to t 'other place you know
(For I speak in simple language — and I never yet was low).

It was rainin' up at Angel's — we war sittin' round the bar,
Discussin' of "Free Silver" that was "going soon to par,"
And Ah Sin stood thar a-listenin' like a simple guileless child,
That hears the Angels singin' — so dreamy like he smiled.

But we knew while he was standin' thar — of all that heathen heard
And saw — he never understood a single blessed word;
Till Brown of Calaveras, who had waltzed up on his bike,
Sez: "What is *your* opinion, John, that this Free Silver 's like?"

But Ah Sin said, "No shabbee," in his childish, simple way,
And Brown he tipped a wink at us and then he had his say:

He demonstrated then and thar how silver was as good
As gold — if folks war n't blasted fools, and only understood!

He showed how we "were crucified upon a cross of gold"
By millionaires, and banged his fist, until our blood ran cold.
He was a most convincin' man — was Brown in all his ways,
And his skill with a revolver, folks had oft remarked with praise.

He showed us how the ratio should be as "sixteen to one,"
And he sorted out some dollars — while the boys enjoyed the fun —
And laid them on the counter — and heaped 'em in a pile,
While Ah Sin, *he* drew nearer with his happy, pensive smile.

"The heathen in his blindness bows down to wood and stone,"
Said Brown, "but this poor heathen won't bow to gold alone;
So speak, my poor Mongolian, and show us *your* idee
Of what we call 'Free Silver' and what is meant by 'Free.'"

Swift was the smile that stole across that heathen's face! I grieve
That swifter was the hand that swept those dollars up his sleeve.
"Me shabbee 'Silvel' allee same as Mellican man," says he;
"Me shabbee 'Flee' means 'B'longs to none,' so Chinaman catch *he!*"

Now, childlike as his logic was, it did n't justify
The way the whole crowd went for him without a reason why;
And the language Brown made use of I shall not attempt to show,
For my words are plain and simple — and I never yet was low.

Then Abner Dean called "Order!" and he said "that it would seem
The gentleman from China's deductions were extreme;
I move that we should teach him, in a manner that shall strike,
The 'bi-metallic balance' on Mr. Brown's new bike!"

Now Dean was scientific, — but was sinful, too, and gay, —
And I hold it most improper for a gent to act that way,
And having muddled Ah Sin's brains with that same silver craze,
To set him on a bicycle — and he not know its ways.

They set him on and set him off; it surely seemed a sin
To see him waltz from left to right, and wobble out and in,
Till his pigtail caught within the wheel and wound up round its rim,
And that bicycle got up and reared — and then crawled over him.

"My poor Mongolian friend," said Dean, "it's plain that in your case
Your centre point of gravity don't fall within your base.
We 'll tie the silver in a bag and hang it from your queue,
And then — by scientific law — you 'll keep your balance *true!*"

They tied that silver to his queue, and it hung down behind,
But always straight, no matter which the side Ah Sin inclined —
For though a sinful sort of man — and lightsome, too, I ween —
He was no slouch in *Science* — was Mister Abner Dean!

And here I would remark how vain are all deceitful tricks, —
The boomerang we throw comes back to give *us* its last licks, —
And that same weight on Ah Sin's queue set him up straight and plumb,
And he scooted past us down the grade and left us cold and dumb!

"Come back! Come back!" we called at last. We heard a shriek of glee,
And something sounding strangely like "All litee! Silvel's flee!"
And saw his feet tucked on the wheel — the bike go all alone!
And break the biggest record Angel's Camp had ever known!

He raised the hill without a spill, and still his speed maintained,
For why? — he traveled on the sheer momentum he had gained,
And vanished like a meteor — with his queue stretched in the gale,
Or I might say a Comet — takin' in that silver tail!

But not again we saw his face — nor Brown his "Silver Free"!
And I marvel in my simple mind howe'er these thing[illegible]

But I do not reproduce the speech of Brown who saw him go,
For my words are pure and simple — and I never yet was low!

"HASTA MAÑANA"

When all 's in bud, and the leaf still unfolding,
When there are ruby points still on the spray,
When that prim school gown your charms are withholding,
Then, Manuela, child, well may you say:
"Hasta Mañana! Hasta Mañana!
Until to-morrow — *amigo*, alway."

When, Manuela, white, crimson, and yellow,
Peep through green sepals the roses of May,
And through black laces the bloom of your face is
Fresh as those roses, child, still you may say:
Through your *mantilla* — coy Manuela!
"Hasta Mañana, *amigo*, alway."

When all 's in bloom, and the rose in its passion
Warmed on your bosom would never say nay,
Still it is wise — in your own country fashion —
Under your opening fan, only to say:
"Hasta Mañana! Hasta Mañana!
Until to-morrow, *amigo*, alway."

When all is gray and the roses are scattered,
Hearts may have broken that brook no delay,
Yet will to-morrow, surcease of sorrow
Bring unto eyes and lips that still can say:
"Hasta Mañana! Hasta Mañana!
Until to-morrow is best for to-day!"

Phrase of Castilian lands! Speech, that in languor
Softly procrastinates, for "aye" or "nay,"
From Seville's orange groves to remote Yanguea,
Best heard on rosy lips — let thy words say:
"Hasta Mañana! Hasta Mañana!
Until to-morrow, *amigo*, alway!"

LINES TO A PORTRAIT, BY A SUPERIOR PERSON

When I bought you for a song,
Years ago — Lord knows how long! —
I was struck — I may be wrong —
By your features,
And — a something in your air
That I could n't quite compare
To my other plain or fair
Fellow-creatures.

In your simple, oval frame
You were not well known to fame,
But to me — 't was all the same —
Whoe'er drew you;
For your face I can't forget,
Though I oftentimes regret
That, somehow, I never yet
Saw quite through you.

Yet each morning, when I rise,
I go first to greet your eyes;
And, in turn, *you* scrutinize
My presentment.
And when shades of evening fall,
As you hang upon my wall,
You 're the last thing I recall
With contentment.

And Cirencester — half mud and thatch,
Dry and crisp as a tinder match,
Was fiercely beleaguered by foes, who 'd catch
At any device that could harry and rout
The folk that so boldly were holding out.

For the streets of the town — as you 'll see to-day —
Were twisted and curved in a curious way
That kept the invaders still at bay;
And the longest bolt that a Saxon drew
Was stopped, ere a dozen of yards it flew,
By a turn in the street, and a law so true
That even these robbers — of all laws scorners! —
Knew you could n't shoot arrows *around* street corners.

So they sat them down on a little knoll,
And each man scratched his Saxon poll,
And stared at the sky, where, clear and high,
The birds of that summer went singing by,
As if, in his glee, each motley jester
Were mocking the foes of Cirencester,
Till the jeering crow and the saucy linnet
Seemed all to be saying: "Ah! you 're not in it!"

High o'er their heads the mavis flew,
And the "ouzel-cock so black of hue";
And the "throstle," with his "note so true"
(You remember what Shakespeare says — *he* knew);
And the soaring lark, that kept dropping through
Like a bucket spilling in wells of blue;
And the merlin — seen on heraldic panes —
With legs as vague as the Queen of Spain's;
And the dashing swift that would *ricochet*
From the tufts of grasses before them, yet —

Like bold Antæus — would each time bring
New life from the earth, barely touched by his wing;
And the swallow and martlet that always knew
The straightest way home. Here a Saxon churl drew
His breath — tapped his forehead — an idea *had* got through!

So they brought them some nets, which straightway they filled
With the swallows and martlets — the sweet birds who build
In the houses of man — all that innocent guild
Who sing at their labor on eaves and in thatch —
And they stuck on their feathers a rude lighted match
Made of resin and tow. Then they let them all go
To be free! As a childlike diversion? Ah, no!
To work Cirencester's red ruin and woe.

For straight to each nest they flew, in wild quest
Of their homes and their fledglings — that they loved the best;
And straighter than arrow of Saxon e'er sped
They shot o'er the curving streets, high overhead,
Bringing fire and terror to roof-tree and bed,
Till the town broke in flame, wherever they came,
To the Briton's red ruin — the Saxon's red shame!

Yet they 're all gone together! To-day you 'll dig up
From "mound" or from "barrow" some arrow or cup.
Their fame is forgotten — their story is ended —
'Neath the feet of the race they have mixed with and blended.
But the birds are unchanged — the ouzel-cock sings,
Still gold on his crest and still black on his wings;
And the lark chants on high, as he mounts to the sky,
Still brown in his coat and still dim in his eye;
While the swallow or martlet is still a free nester
In the *eaves and the* roofs of thrice-built Cirencester.

"I 'm a company floater and business promoter, and this is
my little plan:
I show you the dangers to which you are strangers, and
now for a sum you 'll learn
What price you expect us — as per this Prospectus — to *in-*
sure your safe return."

Then Bilson stared, and he almost r'ared, but he spoke in
a calm-like tone:
"You 'll excuse me for sayin' you 're rather delayin' your
chance to insure *your own!*
For we're wayworn and weary, your style isn't cheery, we've
had quite enough of your game."
But — what did affect us — he took that Prospectus and
chucked it right into the flame!

Then our roarin' fire of bresh and brier flashed up on the
Stanislow,
And Jefferson Clay went softly away with that youth with
a downcast brow,
And Jones of Yolo repeated his solo on that still, calm
evening air,
And we thought with a shiver of Yukon River and the
fort that was called "Get There!"

UNCLE JUBA

"DAR was a man in Florida, dey called him 'Uncle Ju,'
De doctor found him proof agin all fevers dat dey knew;
De cholera bacillus he would brush away like flies,
And yaller fever microbes he would simply jess despise.
For he was such a bery seasoned nigger
Froo and froo — all froo,
Jess de acclimated, vaccinated figger
To do — to do.

When de sojer boys came marching, dey would
shout,
'Lordy! Here 's de man for Cuba — trot him
out.
For even if he cannot pull a trigger
Just like you — like you,
He 's a seasoned and an acclimated figure,
Dat will do — will do.'

"De proudest man in Florida dat day was 'Uncle Ju,'
When dey marched him off to Cuba wid de odder boys in
blue;
He had a brand-new uniform, a red cross on his arm,
He said, 'Don't mind me, darkies, I can't come to any harm,
For de surgeon dat inspected of my figger
When on view — on view,
Sez I 'm just de kind of acclimated nigger
Dat 'ud do — would do.
I can tackle yaller fever all de day,
I 'm de only man for Cuba what can stay,
For agin de bery worst kind of malaria
Dat dey knew — dey knew,
I 'm an iron-plated, sheathed and belted area
Froo and froo — all froo.'

"Alas! for Ju, poor Uncle Ju, aldo' dar was no doubt
Dey passed him froo as fever proof, one ting dey had left
out;
For while he took his rations straight, and odders died like
flies,
Along o' dat 'er Yaller Jack and deadly Cuban skies,
And though such a bery highly seasoned nigger
Froo and froo — all froo,
And an acclimated, vaccinated figure
Just like new — like new,

One day a Spanish gunner sent a shell
Which skooted dat poor darkie off to dwell
Where de fever would send any odder nigger
Like you — like you,
For it flattened out dat acclimated figger
Ob old Ju — poor Ju."

THE QUEEN'S DEATH

(ON THE DEATH OF QUEEN VICTORIA)

When your men bowed heads together
With hushed lips,
And the globe swung out from gladness
To eclipse;

When your drums from the equator
To the pole
Carried round it an unending
Funeral roll;

When your capitals from Norway
To the Cape
Through their streets and from their houses
Trailed their crape;

Still the sun awoke to gladness
As of old,
And the stars their midnight beauty
Still unrolled;

For the glory born of Goodness
Never dies,
And its flag is not half-masted
In the skies.

THE SWORD OF DON JOSÉ

(TOLD AT THE MISSION OF SAN LUIS REY, 1860)

(Bret Harte's last poem)

AYE, look, there it hangs! You would think 't was a cross
Fairly wrought of old iron. Yet, barring the loss
Of some twisted work here that once guarded the hand,
You might say 't was the hilt of some cavalier's brand;
As it is, of a truth! You are staring, Señor!
At this shrine, at this altar, where never before
Hung *ex voto* so strange; at these walls in decay,
All that stands of the Mission of San Luis Rey;
At these leagues of wild *llano* beyond, which still hoard
In their heart this poor shrine, and a cavalier's sword!

Yes! It hangs there to praise Holy Church and the spell
She once broke in her power and glory; as well
As that tough blade she snapped in its vengeance, just
when —
But here is — Don Pancho! — a tale for *your* pen!

You accept. Then observe on the blade near its haft
The world-renowned stamp of that chief of his craft
In Toledo, Sebastian Hernandez. The date
You will note: sixteen hundred and seventy-eight!
That 's the year, so 't is said, when this story begins
And he fashioned that blade for our sorrows and sins.

From a baldric of Cordovan leather and steel
It trailed in its prime, at the insolent heel
Of Don José Ramirez, a Toledan knight,
Poor in all, so 't was said, but a stomach for fight.
And that blade, like himself, was so eager and keen
It would glide through a corselet and all else between;

And so supple 't would double from point to the hilt,
Yet pierce a cuirass like a lance in full tilt;
Till 'twixt Master and Sword, there was scarcely a day
That both were not *drawn* in some quarrel or fray.

Then Ruy Mendoza, a grandee of Spain,
Castellan of Toledo, was called to maintain
That such blades should be parted, but José replied,
"Come and try it!" — while Ruy let fall, on his side
Certain sneers which too free a translation might mar,
Such as "Ho! *Espadachin!*" and "*Fanfarronear!*"
Till Don José burst out that "the whole race abhorred,"
The line of Mendoza's should "*fall by his sword.*"

The oath of a braggart, you 'd say? Well, in truth,
So it seemed, for that oath wrought Ramirez but ruth;
And spite of the lightnings that leaped from his blade,
Here and there, everywhere, never point yet he made;
While the sword of Mendoza, pressing closely but true,
At the third and fourth pass ran the challenger through,
And he fell. But they say as the proud victor grasped
The sword of Ramirez, the dying man gasped,
And his white lips repeated the words of his boast:
"Ye — shall — fall — by — my — sword," as he gave up
the ghost.

"Retribution?" *Quien sabe?* The tale 's not yet done.
For a twelvemonth scarce passed since that victory won
And the sword of Don José hung up in the hall
Of Mendoza's own castle, a lesson for all
Who love brawls to consider, when one summer noon
Don Ruy came home just an hour too soon,
As some husbands will do when their wives prove untrue,
And discovered his own with a lover, who flew

From her bower through passage and hall in dismay,
With the Don in pursuit, but at last stood at bay
In the hall, where they closed in a deadly affray.

But here, runs the tale, when the lover's bright blade,
Engaging Don Ruy's, showed out "in parade,"
The latter drew back with a cry and a start
Which threw up his guard, and straightway through his heart
Passed the sword of his rival. He fell, but they say
He pointed one hand, as his soul was set free,
To the blade, and gasped out: "'T is *his* sword! Ay de mi!"
And 't was true! For the lover, unarmed in his flight,
Caught up the first weapon that chanced to his sight—
The sword on the wall, José's own fateful brand,
Not knowing the curse to be wrought by his hand.

So the first victim fell! When Don Luis, the heir
Of the luckless Don Ruy, in haste summoned there,
Heard the tale, he commanded the sword which had wrought
Such mischance to his race to be instantly brought,
And in presence of all smote the blade such a blow
'Cross the mail of his knee as should snap it; but, no;
For that well-tempered steel, from its point to its heel,
Was so supple, it bent in an arc like a wheel,
And recoiling, glanced up, to the horror of all,
Through the throat of the heir, in his dead father's hall!

Next of kin was a soldier, Ramon, who maintained
That by boldness alone was security gained,
And the curse would be naught to the man who dared trip
Through the rest of his life with that sword *on his hip*,
As he should. But, what would you? when *he* took the field,
His troop was surrounded; himself made to yield

And deliver his sword! You can fancy the rest
When you think of the curse. By the foe sorely pressed
In a fight, when released, he fell by that brand
Of the Spanish José, in some strange Flemish hand!

Then the sword disappeared, and with it, it seemed,
The race of Mendoza. No man ever dreamed
Of a curse lying *perdu* for centuries; when,
Some time in the year eighteen hundred and ten,
There died at the Pueblo of San Luis Rey
Comandante *Mendoza*, descended, they say,
From those proud hidalgos who brought in their hands
No sword, but the cross, to these far heathen lands,
And he left but one son, Agustin, to alone
Bear the curse of his race (though to him all unknown);
A studious youth, quite devout from a child,
With no trace of that sin his ancestors defiled.

You know the *Pueblo?* On its outskirts there stood
The *casa* new-built of *El Capitan* Wood
An American trader, who brought from the seas
Much wealth and the power to live at his ease.
And his *casa* was filled with the spoils of all climes
He had known; silks and china, rare goods of all times.
But notably first, 'midst queer idols and charms,
Was a rare and historical trophy of arms;
And supreme over all, hung the prize of that hoard,
An antique and genuine Toledan sword.

He had, too, a son, who was playmate and friend
To Agustin. Together, their joy was to spend
In this house of rare treasures their hours of play;
And here it so chanced that an unlucky day
The son of the host in adventurous zeal
Climbed the wall to examine that queer-looking steel

While Agustin looked on. A misstep! A wild cry!
And a clutch that tore loose that queer weapon on high,
And they both hurtled down on Agustin beneath
With his uplifted arms, and his breast a mere sheath
For the blade! When, thank God! (and all glory and praise
To our blessed San Luis, whose shrine here we raise!)
Its point struck the cross ever hung at his neck
And shivered like glass! a miraculous wreck!
Without splinter or fragment save this near the hilt,
And of innocent blood not a drop ever spilt!

There's the tale! Yet not all! though that cross broke the spell
It ended the race of Mendoza as well,
For that youth was the last of his name! You ask, "How?
Died he too?" Nay, Don Pancho, — *he* speaks with you now, —
Spared that curse as "*Agustin*," his young life he laid,
With his vows, on this altar, as "*Brother Merced.*"
And this cross on my breast with this dent, as you see,
Hangs but where it hung when that spell was set free!

THE END

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